

Hafa Adai!

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OPINION METER

This week's poll:
Do you support a complete ban on smoking in restaurants, bars, and other public places in the CNMI?

Let your voice be heard!
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to cast your vote.

INSIDE



Costly Gold

Gold, which has soared to record levels, hit a new milestone, rising to \$1,000 an ounce for the first time.

BUSINESS...Page 9



Pacquiao Fever

Manny Pacquiao means many things to people in the Philippines, where focusing on his training can be tough.

MAHARLIKA...Page 12



Crystal Debut

Billy Crystal whacked himself in the helmet with his backswing and watched his team lose.

LIFE & STYLE...Page 20

Fitil warns agencies vs overspending. **PAGE 3**
Businessman accused of rape freed on bail. **PAGE 5**

Horizon follows Matson fee hike

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSISTANT EDITOR



USNS SAFEGUARD

Diving independent duty foreman Lee Fitzgerald shows off the equipment inside the hyperbaric chamber of the USNS *Safeguard*, which docked at the Port of Saipan yesterday. The rescue and salvage ship's missions include salvage of stranded vessels; rescue and assistance operations; recovery of submerged objects; and manned-diving operations.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Dollar's clout sinks worldwide

By ALAN CLENDENNING
AP BUSINESS WRITER

SAO PAULO, Brazil (AP)—Antique store owners in lower Manhattan, ticket vendors at India's Taj Mahal and Brazilian business executives heading to China all have one thing in common these days: They don't want U.S. dollars.

Hit by a free fall with no end in sight, the once mighty U.S. dollar is no longer just crashing on currency markets and making life more expensive for American tourists and business people abroad; its clout is evaporating worldwide as foreign businesses and individuals turn to other currencies.

See **DOLLAR'S** on Page 4



AP

Euro coins and dollar bills are seen in Frankfurt, central Germany, in a Feb. 27, 2008, file photo. The euro continued its relentless climb on Friday, reaching a new record high of US\$1.5651, while the dollar again dipped below 100 Japanese yen.

A week after Matson Navigation Co. raised its fuel surcharge fee, main competitor Horizon Lines Inc. mirrored the move by increasing its fuel surcharge by 2.25 percentage points to a record 33.75 percent for shipments between the mainland and Hawaii, Guam, and Micronesia.

According to the *Honolulu Star Bulletin*, the new surcharge will go into effect April 7, or a day after Matson Navigation's own increase takes effect in Hawaii, Guam/Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands, and Micronesia services.

This is the seventh straight increase for both shipping companies since their fuel

See **HORIZON** on Page 4

New omnibus bill takes the place of 2483

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSISTANT EDITOR

The new omnibus bill that will replace S.2483 is specific about the federal government taking over CNMI immigration by including language that approves the implementation of the full provisions of the Covenant.

S.2739 was introduced in the U.S. Senate on Tuesday (Wednesday in the CNMI) and the provision on the Northern Mariana Islands federalization of immigration leaps out from the bill's very definition, which is: "A bill to authorize certain programs and activities in the Department of the Interior, the Forest Service, and the Department of Energy, to implement further the Act approving the Covenant to Establish a Commonwealth of the North-



Bingaman

See **NEW** on Page 4

Local

Ex-stateless invited to '09 Presidential Inauguration

By **RIANNE PANGELINAN-BROWN**
rianne_pangelinan@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A former "stateless" student has been invited to attend a historic event that occurs only once every four years—the Presidential Inauguration—which is next scheduled to be held at the nation's capital on Jan. 30, 2009.

Nineteen-year-old Christina Ta, who graduated with honors at the Grace Christian Academy last year, was born to foreign parents and was considered stateless until she received her U.S. passport in 2005.

Ta thinks the invitation to the nation's capital is "surreal."

"I was really surprised. I haven't even seen the invitation yet," she laughed during a telephone interview.

Ta is currently attending her first year as a pre-Medicine student at the University of Berkeley.

According to a letter from the University Presidential Inaugural Conference, Ta had been selected to take part in the Inauguration as an Inaugural Scholar. The selection was based on the leadership skills she had demonstrated at the National Youth Leadership Forum on Medicine, which was held last year.

Through the inauguration, Ta hopes to learn more about politics and develop more interest in the subject, considering that her main focus right now is medicine.

Ta will be honored as a young leader for five full days in the nation's capital, and will participate in activities relating to the presidential inauguration.

Along with taking part in the inauguration ceremony, she will also attend a black-tie Gala Inaugural Ball and take part in exclusive events and activities surrounding the historic occasion.

She will have the opportunity to meet and interact with prominent VIPs, White House officials, government leaders, political experts, members of Congress and leading decision makers.

Ta's registration to the event is due for submission. Her participation in the event costs up to \$2,729.

Annette Ta, Christina's mother, said the cost is not a problem when it comes to giving her children the most in life.

"This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, and my husband and I want her to have it," Annette said.

Christina's father and owner of Dollar Days Wholesale, Ta Bun Kuy, said he was beyond excited when he found out his daughter got invited to the White House.

"I am just very proud of her. Very, very proud," Ta Bun Kuy said.

Christina is the fourth of eight children, all of whom are pursuing or will be pursuing careers in the U.S.



The 255-foot and 3,282-ton USNS *Safeguard* is seen docked at the Port of Saipan yesterday. Safeguard is the lead ship of the newest auxiliary rescue and salvage class of vessels constructed for the U.S. Navy.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

USNS Safeguard conducts site survey

The USNS *Safeguard* T-ARS 50 arrived yesterday morning to continue its two-day site surveying on Saipan.

Capt. Edward Dickinson said the salvage ship is on island to finish up its site survey of a fishing vessel that sits abandoned near the Port of Saipan.

"We're doing this if in case the govern-

ment wants it removed, and other obstructions that may be around that they may want us to get rid off," Diskenson said.

The USNS *Safeguard* is carrying at least 40 crewmembers, 16 of whom are expert divers.

The lead ship of the SAFEGUARD-class is the Navy's only forward de-

ployed Rescue and Salvage Ship.

The ship was transferred to the Military Sealift Command on Sept. 26, 2007.

There are only four of its kind in the U.S. Navy.

The USNS *Safeguard* T-ARS 50 will be leaving Saipan on Sunday for Yap where they will also conduct a site survey. *(Rianne Pangelinan-Brown)*

McDONALD'S 15th ANNIVERSARY PROMO

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PROMOTION PERIOD - MARCH 15 TO 18, 2008

TO ALL OUR VALUED CUSTOMERS
THANK YOU FOR THE CONTINUOUS PATRONAGE
From the staff and management of McDonald's

Fitial warns agencies vs overspending

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSISTANT EDITOR

The Fitial administration ordered government agencies to

'Delay in Miura proceedings irregular, but reasonable'

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_deltorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Superior Court Associate Judge Ramona V. Manglona finds the delay in Japanese businessman Kazuyoshi Miura's case proceedings irregular but reasonable.

Manglona said the one-week delay began with Miura's request for counsel and culminated with the filing of his motion to dismiss and for his release from custody.

"While irregular, it does not appear that Miura was substantially disadvantaged by this delay, and under all of the circumstances of this case, the court does not find the period of the delay to be unreasonable," said Manglona in her written order issued yesterday denying the defendant's motion to dismiss and for release.

At the March 5 hearing, Manglona orally ruled that the warrantless arrest of Miura was lawful. She found that sufficient credible evidence exists to warrant Miura's continued detention pending the outcome of formal extradition proceedings. She also denied the motion to dismiss.

In her 20-page written deci-

Man pleads guilty of trafficking 'ice'

A man indicted in federal court for selling crystal methamphetamine or "ice" on Tinian entered a guilty plea yesterday.

Tian Yun Huang, 40, a Chinese, alias Ma, pleaded guilty to three counts of distribution of a controlled substance.

U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Alex R. Munson accepted Huang's plea and set the sentencing for June 17, 2008 at 10am.

Munson ordered the U.S. Probation Office to submit a presentence investigation report by May 13, 2008.

Munson remanded the defendant to the custody of the U.S. Marshal.

According to the indictment, Huang sold "ice" on Jan. 9 and 10, 2008, in three transactions. The total amount of "ice" was 39 grams.

A Drug Enforcement Administration special agent stated in his report that on Jan. 9, 2008, detectives from the Department of Public Safety debriefed a confidential source regarding "ice" traffickers on Tinian.

The CS disclosed that a Chinese man known as Ma was distributing "ice" from his residence in Turn Key Housing in San Jose, Tinian. (Ferdie de la Torre)

keep careful tabs on their expenditures and fill only those positions that are vacant for the rest of the fiscal year.

Citing a Feb. 6, 2008, or-

sion yesterday, Manglona said the intervening hearings in this case before Superior Court associate judge David Wiseman were a result of the misperception that the proceeding was a regular criminal matter.

Consequently, the judge said, the matter was handled according to procedures that appropriately respect the constitutional rights of a person accused of a crime.

Manglona pointed out that, although these rights are in excess of those implicated by the statute, Miura has availed himself of the opportunities afforded by these procedures while preparing a vigorous opposition to the examination and commitment hearing.

On the warrantless arrest issue, the judge said the question is whether there was reasonable information known by the

der from Lt. Gov. Timothy P. Villagomez, Gov. Benigno R. Fitial sent a memo yesterday to all government agencies reminding them not to ask gov-

ernment for additional funding after they have spent all of their available budget.

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nor in a letter that, pursuant to ICMC Section 7701(a) of the Planning & Budgeting Act, you are not permitted to obligate the government beyond available budget authority," it stated.

Fitial is asking government agencies and their heads to keep within their budget as this would allow the administration to fulfill its goal of decreasing government spending by \$2 million a month.

"I continue to work together with the Legislative leadership for legislation allowing for relief measures that will decrease the rate of expenditures and maximize remaining budget authority. Our challenge is to reduce monthly expenditures from an average of \$15 million per month to essentially \$13 million per

month for the remainder of the fiscal year," he said.

However, even if the House and Senate pass relief measures, Fitial said they will still not be able to reduce the government's projected budget authority shortfall of \$14 million to zero.

"[Thus] continued diligence in expenditure reduction will be necessary," he said.

Fitial added that if government agencies are looking to the Governor's Office to bail them out once their budget is exhausted, they have another think coming.

"I would like to reemphasize that once you have exhausted your budget authority, payment of payroll and other expenses will cease unless additional funding is made available. You are all strongly advised and forewarned to prepare and plan accordingly the expenditure of remaining budget authority," he said.



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New Aussie funding boosts anti-HIV, STI efforts in Pacific

NOUMEA—On his recent visit to the Solomon Islands, Australian Prime Minister Mr Kevin Rudd announced that the Australian government will commit \$30 million over a five-year period to the establishment of the “Pacific Islands HIV and Sexually Transmitted Infections Response Fund.”

Dr Jimmie Rodgers, director-general of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community, welcomed the announcement, saying “Australia’s commitment to scale up and sustain efforts to effectively address HIV and other STI issues in the Pacific through the HIV & STI Response Fund is remarkable. SPC applauds Australia’s commitment, and this recognition that urgent action is needed to prevent HIV taking hold in the region.”

The Response Fund complements other funding received separately from France, New Zealand, the Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and the Asian Development Bank. It is designed to help Pacific island countries and territories implement their own HIV and other STIs national strategies as well as national components of the Pacific Regional Strategy on HIV and other STIs, 2009–2013.

Rodgers hopes that the Response Fund would provide a platform for further contributions from other current donors, such as New Zealand and France.

The Response Fund will continue to support some of the activities currently being implemented through the Australian-funded Pacific Regional HIV/AIDS Project based in Suva, Fiji. This includes specific grants for civil society organizations and support for capacity development organizations. It will also include, for the first time, annual allocations for Pacific Island countries and territories to help support the implementation of their national plans for preventing HIV and other STIs.

The establishment of the Response Fund follows the approval by Pacific Islands Forum Leaders at their meeting in Tonga last October of the extension of the current Pacific Regional Strategy on HIV. The Strategy has been amended to strengthen the focus on emerging trends, such as the increasing incidence of other STIs.

The Response Fund will be managed by SPC and overseen by an independent fund committee. It is separate to the funding provided to Papua New Guinea.

The Pacific region’s experience of HIV is unique. In Papua New Guinea, the largest country in the Pacific island region, HIV infection rates have reached epidemic levels. In other Pacific Island countries and territories, HIV prevalence is generally low, but

research shows that numerous risk factors exist, indicating the potential for rapid spread of the virus. Major challenges that need to be addressed

urgently in the region include high rates of STIs, gender inequality and high levels of gender-based violence, discrimination against people living

with HIV, limited access to prevention, counselling and treatment services, and the need to better coordinate the delivery of these services. **(SPC)**



SUGAR KING PROJECT

A construction worker paints the wall of the new estate food courtyard at the Sugar King Estate Wednesday afternoon.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

DOLLAR'S

From Page 1

Experts say the bleak U.S. economic forecast means it will take years for the greenback to recover its value and prestige.

Negative dollar sentiment is growing in nations where the dollar was historically accepted as equal or better than local currency—and dollar aversion is even extending to some quarters in the United States.

At the Taj Mahal, dollars were always legal tender, alongside rupees, for entry into the palace. But because of the falling value of the dollar, the government implemented a rupees-only policy a month ago. Indian merchants catering to tourists have also turned bearish on the dollar.

“Gone are the days when we used to run after dollars, holding onto them for rainy days,” said Vijay Narain, a tour operator in the city of Agra where the Taj Mahal is located. “Now we prefer the euro. It gives us more riches.”

In Bolivia, billboards feature George Washington’s image on a \$1 bill alongside a bright pink 500 euro note, encouraging savers to turn to the euro to tuck away money earned abroad or sent home in remittances.

“If the dollar’s going down ... save it in Euros!!!” say the signs popping up around La Paz for Bolivia’s Banco Bisa.

And in neighboring Brazil, the Confidence Cambio money-changing service was the first to start offering yuan so travelers to China no longer have to change the money into dollars first. The service is already a hit because Brazil does big business with China, and lots of Brazilians are heading to the Olympics this summer.

“Now we tell people not to take dollars when they go abroad, it’s better to change it directly to the local currency,” said Fabio Agostinho, one of the firm’s managing partners. “If people leave here with dollars and go abroad, they lose when they exchange them. It’s the same thing whether they’re heading to China, Europe or even Argentina.”

In Manhattan’s Bowery district, Billy LeRoy, the owner of Billy’s Antiques & Props, prefers payment in euros so he can stockpile the currency for his annual antique buying trip to Paris.

“Whip out dollars at the French flea market now, and they’ll shoo you away,” he said at his store near apartment buildings where Europeans are snapping up units because they’ve become dirt cheap. “Before it was like the second coming of Christ, but now they don’t want it or if they do take dollars, they’re going to take their pound of flesh.”

The dollar has steadily eroded in value against the euro and other currencies since 2002 as U.S. budget and trade deficits ballooned, but fears of an American recession and credit crisis have sent the dollar to stunning lows amid predictions the slump will continue for a long time.

The euro traded for a record \$1.5625 before declining to \$1.5586 Thursday while the dollar dropped below 100 Japanese yen for the first time since November 1995. It traded as low as 99.75

yen before recovering some ground to 101.68 yen. The dollar also recently hit a 10-year low against the Chilean peso, and fell to its lowest level against Brazil’s real since the nation floated its currency in 1999.

While low dollar cycles have come and gone for decades, experts caution that it’s now much more difficult to predict when this one will end because the euro didn’t exist as competition for the dollar before.

During previous U.S. economic downturns, big foreign funds typically snapped up U.S. treasuries, helping to shore up the dollar to a certain degree. But the euro and currencies from other nations are now seen as legitimate options, and interest rates are higher outside the United States—meaning the funds can get better returns on investments elsewhere.

“You have the U.S. still holding this trade deficit, but now you have the possibility of a U.S. led recession, and you have a weakening currency. So it’s a very dark outlook for the dollar,” said Gareth Sylvester, senior currency strat-

egist with the British firm HIFX Inc., which executed \$40 billion in currency trades last year.

Nations that were once seen as incredibly risky for investments—such as Brazil—are now seen as good long-term bets. And countries such as China and Russia, with burgeoning coffers of money to invest abroad, are thought to be shifting some of their reserves or diversifying fresh income to destinations and currencies outside the United States.

It used to be important for most countries “to accumulate dollars as a precautionary element against rainy days, but the accumulation of reserves has become so large in most emerging market countries that the balance is way beyond what’s needed for precautionary reasons,” said Eliot Kalter, a fellow at Tufts University’s Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy and a former International Monetary Fund official.

While most experts believe the dollar will eventually regain strength, no one is willing to predict when that will happen.

NEW

From Page 1

ern Mariana Islands in Political Union with the United States of America, to amend the Compact of Free Association Amendments Act of 2003, and for other purposes.

S.2739, introduced by Se. Jeff Binga-

man (D, NM), is in the first step in the legislative process. Introduced bills go first to committees that deliberate, investigate, and revise them before they go to general debate.

Majority of bills, however, never make it out of committee. Sometimes the text of one bill is incorporated into another bill, and in those cases the original bill, as it would appear here, would

seem to be abandoned as is the case of the derailed S.2483.

This bill is in the first stage of the legislative process where the bill is considered in committee and may undergo significant changes in markup sessions.

The *Saipan Tribune* has yet to obtain a copy of the new omnibus bill, much less the provision on the CNMI immigration, but a congressional staff source

reported earlier in the week that the provision is essentially similar to the one crafted by Rep. Donna Christensen of U.S. Virgin Islands (H.R. 3079).

Asked for a comment about S.2739 and the specific language in the bill’s definition calling for federal takeover of the islands’ immigration, Gov. Benigno R. Fitial’s press secretary said the Fitial administration needs time to read

the bill before commenting on it.

“The administration will have to carefully review the provisions pertaining to the CNMI. As you know, we are very concerned about the application of federal immigration law in the CNMI. We want to be sure our fundamental economic needs would be met,” said Charles Reyes in an e-mail to the *Saipan Tribune*.

HORIZON

From Page 1

surcharge was lowered to 17.5 percent in January 2007. Among the items affected by the increase will be the cost of shipping a car, which will rise \$17 to \$1,072 from \$1,055 for both companies.

Horizon said its operating costs have increased due to the rapid rise in bunker fuel prices and that raising the fuel

surcharge would recover a portion of the company’s increased cost.

“The rapid rise in fuel prices requires that we do even more to improve fuel efficiency and cost recovery across our entire network,” said John Keenan, president of Horizon Lines LLC.

Horizon Lines, Hawaii’s second-largest shipper, also added five container vessels to its operations in Guam as part of the company’s fleet-enhancement program.

The Charlotte, N.C.-based company says the expansion of its Guam operations was prompted by the U.S. military’s growing presence in the area. More than 8,000 U.S. Marines and their families are being transferred to Guam from Okinawa, Japan, driving trade demand for building materials and other goods.

Last year, Horizon Lines added 250 flat racks in its Pacific service. The equipment is used to transport heavy or

large cargo.

Last March 7, Matson Navigation announced that it was raising its fuel-related surcharge by 2.25 percentage points due to the record increase in oil prices from 31.5 percent to 33.75 percent.

Matson senior vice president David Hoppes said that fuel related expenses remain a major cost component for the company.

“Fuel prices have continued to be adversely affected by unprecedented

demands for oil in the world market,” said Hoppes. “While we recognize the impact these increases have on our customers and consumers in general, fuel consumption is an unavoidable cost that touches virtually all aspects of our operations.”

The company operates a fleet of U.S.-flag containerships and port terminals linking the continental United States to Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, Guam, and Micronesia.

Businessman accused of rape freed on bail

The Superior Court has allowed the temporary release of a businessman accused of raping a female tourist.

In a written order issued Thursday, associate judge Juan T. Lizama ruled that after carefully considering the evidence presented by the defense counsel, the court approves the release of defendant Jun Kitaoka into the care of the third party custo-

dian, Yoshiro Kishimoto.

Lizama said he is satisfied that Kishimoto is willing and able to provide the sufficient amount of supervision required in Kitaoka's situation.

The judge approved the appointment of Kishimoto to the position of third party custodian subject to some conditions.

The bail conditions include a \$6,000 cash deposit to the court, surrendering Kitaoka's passport

to the court, and for him to stay away from ports or airports.

Lizama also ordered the 42-year-old Kitaoka not to consume any alcohol.

Kitaoka, a Japanese, was arrested for sexual assault in the first degree and in the second degree. He allegedly raped a Japanese woman inside her room at a hotel on Feb. 28. The two know each other, according to a police report.

Kitaoka is the vice president of Pau Pau Tours Saipan.

On Aug. 18, 2007, Kitaoka was reportedly beaten up and struck with a baseball bat by two Japanese investors at Banzai Cliff in Marpi.

Police said Hisato Endo and Hidehito Hida forcibly brought Kitaoka to Banzai Cliff where they allegedly beat him up and asked that he either to pay \$250,000 or jump off the cliff.

Kitaoka told police that the suspects left him at Banzai Cliff when a tour guide arrived.

Endo allegedly wanted to talk business with respect to Kitaoka's company, Pau Pau Tours, for over-billing Endo's compa-

ny, Kyowa Tatemono Corp.

Endo was released on bail. He pleaded not guilty.

Hida is the owner of Mugen Corp. that operates Waft By The Sea Restaurant in Tanapag. *(Ferdie de la Torre)*

Nine Saipan beaches red-flagged

The Division of Environmental Quality has raised the red flag on nine sites on Saipan and advises the public not to fish or swim within 300 feet of these locations for the next 48 hours or until otherwise notified.

The agency said that samples collected from Jeffries Beach, North Laulau Beach, S. Laulau

Beach, Tanapag Meeting Hall, DPW Channel Bridge, S. Puerto Rico Dump, Hafa Adai Beach Drainage, Garapan Beach Drainage, and Sugar Dock on Saipan contained excessive concentrations of fecal indicator bacteria—enterococci—that exceeded the CNMI Marine Water Quality Standards.

These bacteria can indicate the presence of human and animal waste in the water. However, studies have shown that storm water runoff in tropical environments may also contain these bacteria from the natural environment, which may not be directly associated with public health concerns.

DEQ analyzed samples of marine recreational and storm drainage water from 50 locations on Saipan, 10 on Tinian, 12 on Rota and a total of 11 samples from the shores surrounding Managaha.

The agency welcomes all inquiries as to the quality of the beach water. The public is encouraged to contact DEQ at 664-8500 with any questions concerning this matter. *(DEQ)*

Matson's North retiring after four-decade maritime career

After a maritime career that spanned four decades, including 27 years with Matson Navigation Co., Gary North, senior vice president Pacific, is retiring on April 1.

"Gary's contributions to Matson have been enormous and encompassed such milestones as the start up of our Guam service, formation of SSAT on the West Coast and automation of the company's hub terminal facility at Sand Island," said James Andrasick, Matson president and CEO.

"Most recently, he has been at the forefront of the Hawaii Harbors Users Group in its efforts to address the need to modernize the state's port facilities. Throughout his career, Gary has been passion-

ate about Matson and its people. That dedication has been reflected in all that he has done for the company over the years."

North's association with Matson dates back to 1967, when he started with the company as a cargo planner in Hawaii's freight department. In the 1970s and early '80s, he held management and later executive posts with Seatrain Lines and U.S. Lines. He rejoined Matson in 1987 as vice president, area manager, Hawaii. In 1989, he was promoted to vice president, operations, and transferred to Matson's headquarters, which were then in San Francisco. In 1991, he was assigned the additional responsibility of serving as president of Matson Termi-

nals, Inc. He was promoted to senior vice president of Matson in 1993. He relocated to Honolulu as senior vice president, Pacific, in 2003.

"While Gary has made remarkable contributions to Matson's business operations, he is recognized equally for his tremendous compassion for community service," said Allen Doane, Alexander & Baldwin, Inc. chairman and chief executive officer and Matson chairman. "He has extended Matson's, as well as the A&B Foundation's, charitable reach in the Pacific to remote regions such as Micronesia and the Marshall Islands. Gary has done a tremendous job representing Matson in a wide range of community service programs in a

heartfelt, genuine manner."

North's community service efforts have included posts on the boards of the American Red Cross of Hawaii, Hawaii Food Bank and Aloha United Way.

North will continue to serve as chair of HHUG and will have a consulting role in various key initiatives involving Matson's operations in the Pacific. *(Matson)*

SEARCH AND RESCUE

Lt. Jess Mesa points at the location of the "rescuers" during Friday morning's search and rescue operation exercise at the Forbidden Island in Kagman. The training is an ongoing effort to improve response time and communications during maritime SAR cases. Agencies involved included the Department of Public Safety, Boating Safety Division, Fire Division, Fish and Wildlife, CNMI Emergency Management Office, Commonwealth Ports Authority, U.S. Coast Guard and US Navy.



JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

KagES to host 2-day science fair

The Kagman Elementary will be holding a two-day 5th Annual Science Fair on March 17-18, 2008.

The goals of this event are to provide learning experiences to all students of KagES, develop their scientific literacy by giving them opportunity to explore their ideas and mastery skills through hands-on activities and project presentation, promote team building,

sportsmanship, encourage parental involvement with their children's education and acknowledge them as well.

The winning theme for this event is "Science: Let our young literate scientists explore, and discover the wonders of the world" submitted by 4th grader Gregory Manuel Sablan Jr., winning for himself first place in the contest.

Other winners of the theme contest are:

- Joseph Cabrera, second place, 4th grade student;
- Arvin Mettao, third place; 5th grade student; and
- Marcy Ermitanio, fourth place, 4th grade student.

Parents of the participating students and all Kagman Elementary Schools' parents are invited to come on March 17-18, 2008 for public viewing from 2pm to 3:30pm. *(PR)*

 RESTAURANT Moby Dick Fresh Sea Foods & Steak		
Monday SPECIAL LUNCH Fish Muniere with Soup or Salad (Clam Chowder Soup, Tossed Green Salad) with FREE Ice Tea (No refill) ONLY \$6.00 BENTO Lumpia Shanghai Chicken Chopsuey Fish Muniere Gelatine ONLY \$7.00	Tuesday SPECIAL LUNCH Fried Chicken with Soup or Salad (Clam Chowder Soup, Tossed Green Salad) with FREE Ice Tea (No refill) ONLY \$6.00 BENTO Fried Chicken Mini Burger Spaghetti Gelatine ONLY \$7.00	Wednesday SPECIAL LUNCH Beef Sautee with Soup or Salad (Clam Chowder Soup, Tossed Green Salad) with FREE Ice Tea (No refill) ONLY \$6.00 BENTO Fish Fried Siomai Beef Sautee Potato Salad ONLY \$7.00
Thursday SPECIAL LUNCH Chicken Cutlet with Soup or Salad (Clam Chowder Soup, Tossed Green Salad) with FREE Ice Tea (No refill) ONLY \$6.00 BENTO Pork Ginger Shrimp Chopsuey Chicken Cutlet Potato Salad ONLY \$7.00	Friday SPECIAL LUNCH Shrimp Fried with Soup or Salad (Clam Chowder Soup, Tossed Green Salad) with FREE Ice Tea (No refill) ONLY \$6.00 BENTO Shrimp Fried Fish Teriyaki Sweet & Sour Pork Gelatine ONLY \$7.00	Saturday SPECIAL LUNCH Pork Cutlet with Soup or Salad (Clam Chowder Soup, Tossed Green Salad) with FREE Ice Tea (No refill) ONLY \$6.00 BENTO Pork Cutlet Crab w/ Teriyaki Sauce Yasaitame Gelatine ONLY \$7.00
Sunday SPECIAL LUNCH Tempura w/ Mixed Vegetables with Soup or Salad (Clam Chowder Soup, Tossed Green Salad) with FREE Ice Tea (No refill) ONLY \$6.00	BENTO Tempura w/ Mixed Vegetables, Sweet & Sour Fish, Beef Yakimiku, Potato Salad ONLY \$7.00	

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Lenten Season
Jollibee gives you once again it Best Holy Week Bee-Licious treat
MARCH 17-23, 2008

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TUESDAY
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SATURDAY
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Champ,, Amazing Aloha
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Opinion

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

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EDITORIAL

A fallen star

The Empire State has been tossed into turmoil by the Emperors Club, a high-end prostitution ring that apparently counted New York Gov. Eliot Spitzer, D, as a client. Mr. Spitzer's stunning betrayal of his family and his apparent disregard for the law and the moral code he advocated for himself and his administration made his resignation this week both inevitable and appropriate. Lt. Gov. David Paterson, D, who will succeed him and become New York's first African American governor, deserves support as he tries to put the state's government, and an important reform agenda, back on track.

Mr. Spitzer's sudden downfall is tragic for his three teenage daughters and his wife of 21 years, Silda Wall Spitzer, whose drained visage bore the immensity of what had befallen her family. Repairing the breach of trust with them will be an enormous task for the former state attorney general who took on the titans of Wall Street, insurance companies—and a few prostitution rings. Only the hardest of hearts would not wish him well in that endeavor.

But this is also a tragedy for the people of New York, who sent Mr. Spitzer to Albany in 2006 with the largest electoral victory (69 percent) in state gubernatorial history. He promised to shake up the complex proceedings at the state Capitol on Day One. On that first day alone, he signed good-government executive orders that established ethical guidelines for state employees, sought to curtail the influence of politics on state government and mandated Internet streaming of all meetings of agencies and public authorities subject to the open-meetings law. Much more was promised.

Yet just as it had on Wall Street, Mr. Spitzer's brusque and vindictive manner alienated friend and foe alike. He told a Republican leader of the legislature, "Listen, I'm a (expletive) steamroller, and I'll roll over you and anybody else!" Mr. Spitzer disparaged Assembly Democrats who defied his will in picking a new comptroller. Some of his top aides used the state police to track the Senate majority leader, a Republican who engaged in daily verbal combat with the governor. And Mr. Spitzer incited open rebellion among Democrats and Republicans when he tried to ram through a plan to grant driver's licenses to undocumented immigrants. When he found himself in trouble Monday, with his political career and governorship on the line, Mr. Spitzer had no friends to help save him.

Mr. Spitzer spoke only briefly Wednesday, but he struck all the right notes for a man destroyed by his own actions. "I am deeply sorry that I did not live up to what was expected of me," he said. "To every New Yorker, and to all those who believed in what I tried to stand for, I sincerely apologize." More important, the former rising star of the Democratic Party said that after he heals himself and his family, "I will try once again, outside of politics, to serve the common good and to move toward the ideals and solutions which I believe can build a future of hope and opportunity for us and for our children." Many have found redemption through good works after debilitating scandal. Given the trouble he faces at home and, potentially, with the law, Mr. Spitzer's journey will be a long one.

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Sorry, yes, for getting caught

By PAUL SLANSKY
SPECIAL TO THE LOS ANGELES TIMES

After death and taxes, the next surest thing is that the discovery of sexual misbehavior by a public figure will be instantly followed—as New York Gov. Eliot Spitzer is merely the latest to confirm—by a public apology: “... so sorry ... deeply sorry ... profoundly sorry. ...”

Of course they're sorry! They're sorry they got caught, and now the fun has to stop, and they're being publicly humiliated, and their spouses have to stand up there grimacing—think about how hard it must be to be forgiven for that—and on top of that they might even lose their jobs. Who wouldn't experience pangs of regret?

But how sorry would they be if they hadn't been caught? Remorse, one feels certain, would be the furthest thing from their minds. So the apology extorted by such circumstances is by definition meaningless, a perfunctory bleat of contrition designed to buy time while the damage is assessed. It is never eloquent and never as memorable as the acts being repented. But for apology aficionados, it is that very combination of trite mea culpas for often lurid deeds that makes it all so satisfying.

Some choice examples:

“I sincerely apologize for any pain my actions may have caused. This has been damaging to my family, and I don't want to subject them to any additional pain that might result from carrying out this matter under the scrutiny that comes with holding public office.”

—Rep. Richard Curtis, a reliable anti-gay vote in the Washington State House of Representatives, apologizing in October after it was alleged that he had dressed as a woman and performed fellatio on a customer at an adult book store, then—still wearing the female get-up—went to a hotel and had sex with another man.

“Good evening, Detroit. I want to start tonight by saying to the citizens of this great city, I'm sorry.”

—Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick, apologizing in January after the Detroit Free Press revealed the existence of thousands of sexually explicit text messages between the married mayor and his chief of staff, Christine Beatty. The mayor previously had denied under oath having an affair with her. Among the less explicit of the messages: “I've been dreaming all day about having you to myself for 3 days. Relaxing, laughing, talking, sleeping and making love.”

“I want to, again, offer my deep, sincere apologies to all those I have let down and disappointed with these actions from my past. I am completely responsible. And I am so very, very sorry.”

—Louisiana Sen. David Vitter, apologizing in person in July for his phone number turning up in the phone records of the “D.C. Madam,” Deborah Jeane Palfrey, after his earlier apology—read by a spokesman—was deemed inadequate.

“My conduct that evening was inappropriate. ... It violated the

values of the person I strive to be.”

—Rep. Ken Calvert of California, apologizing in 1994 for being caught in “an extremely embarrassing situation” that consisted of his being found sitting in a parked car receiving oral sex from a prostitute. He claimed for a year that nothing had happened, even though the police officer who caught them had reported seeing him covering his unzipped pants with his hands and rearranging himself back in his dress slacks.

“I'm sorry—so, so sorry that mistakes in my judgment made this day necessary for us all.”

—New Jersey Gov. James McGreevey, apologizing in 2004 for having had an extramarital affair with a man who he then appointed as his homeland security adviser, despite the man's utter lack of qualifications for such a position.

“Am I sorry? Of course. If I did the things that they say I did, am I sorry, do I apologize? Yes.”

—Oregon Sen. Bob Packwood in 1995, conditionally apologizing—if he did these things—to the score of women who had been on the receiving end of more than two decades of unwanted sexual advances (or, as he put it, “the conduct that it was alleged that I did”).

“I'm sorry that I made a mistake. It happened three years ago. I'm human. ...”

—Illinois Rep. Daniel Crane, apologizing in 1983 for having sex several times with a 17-year-old female page. His press secretary, William Mencarow, was out the next day apologizing for telling reporters that “if they required the resignation of all congressmen who have slept with young ladies, you wouldn't have a Congress.”

“I made a serious mistake. I should not have been in the company of any woman not my wife who was not a friend of mine or my wife.”

—Colorado Sen. (and instantly former presidential candidate) Gary Hart, apologizing in 1987 for having spent the night in his D.C. home with model Donna Rice—a rendezvous that only became public knowledge because the widely suspected-of-philandering Hart insanely challenged the media: “Follow me around. I don't care. I'm serious. If anybody wants to put a tail on me, go ahead. They'd be very bored.” They did, and they weren't.

“I have acted in a way that violated the obligations to my family, and that violates my—or any—sense of right and wrong. I apologize first, and most importantly, to my family. I apologize to the public, to whom I promised better.”

—New York Gov. Eliot Spitzer, who prosecuted at least two prostitution rings while he was New York attorney general, apologizing Monday after he was overheard on a federal wiretap allegedly planning an assignation with a prostitute at a Washington, D.C., hotel last month.

Slansky is the author of *Idiots, Hypocrites, Demagogues, and More Idiots*.

EDITORIAL POLICY

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Iraq war will cost us \$3 trillion, and more

By LINDA J. BILMES and JOSEPH E. STIGLITZ
SPECIAL TO THE WASHINGTON POST

There is no such thing as a free lunch, and there is no such thing as a free war. The Iraq adventure has seriously weakened the U.S. economy, whose woes now go far beyond loose mortgage lending. You can't spend \$3 trillion—yes, \$3 trillion—on a failed war abroad and not feel the pain at home.

Some people will scoff at that number, but we've done the math. Senior Bush administration aides certainly pooh-poohed worrisome estimates in the run-up to the war. Former White House economic adviser Lawrence Lindsey reckoned that the conflict would cost \$100 billion to \$200 billion; Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld later called his estimate "baloney." Administration officials insisted that the costs would be more like \$50 billion to \$60 billion. In April 2003, Andrew Natsios, the thoughtful head of the U.S. Agency for International Development, said on "Nightline" that reconstructing Iraq would cost the American taxpayer just \$1.7 billion. Ted Koppel, in disbelief, pressed Natsios on the question, but Natsios stuck to his guns. Others in the administration, such as Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz, hoped that U.S. partners would chip in, as they had in the 1991 Persian Gulf War, or that Iraq's oil would pay for the damages.

The end result of all this wishful thinking? As we approach the fifth anniversary of the invasion, Iraq is not only the second longest war in U.S. history (after Vietnam), it is also the second most costly—surpassed only by World War II.

Why doesn't the public understand the staggering scale of our expenditures? In part because the administration talks only about the upfront costs, which are mostly handled by emergency appropriations. (Iraq funding is apparently still an emergency five years after the war began.) These costs, by our calculations, are now running at \$12 billion a month—\$16 billion if you include Afghanistan. By the time you add in the costs hidden in the defense budget, the money we'll have to spend to help future veterans, and money to refurbish a military whose equipment and materiel have been greatly depleted, the total tab to the federal government will almost surely exceed \$1.5 trillion.

But the costs to our society and economy are far greater. When a young soldier is killed in Iraq or Afghanistan, his or her family will receive a U.S. government check for just \$500,000 (combining life insurance with a "death gratuity")—far less than the typical amount paid by insurance companies for the death of a young person in a car accident. The stark "budgetary cost" of \$500,000 is clearly only a fraction of the total cost society pays for the loss of life—and no one can ever really compensate the families. Moreover, disability pay seldom provides adequate compensation for wounded troops or their families. In one out of five cases of seriously injured soldiers, someone in their family has to give up a job to take care of them.

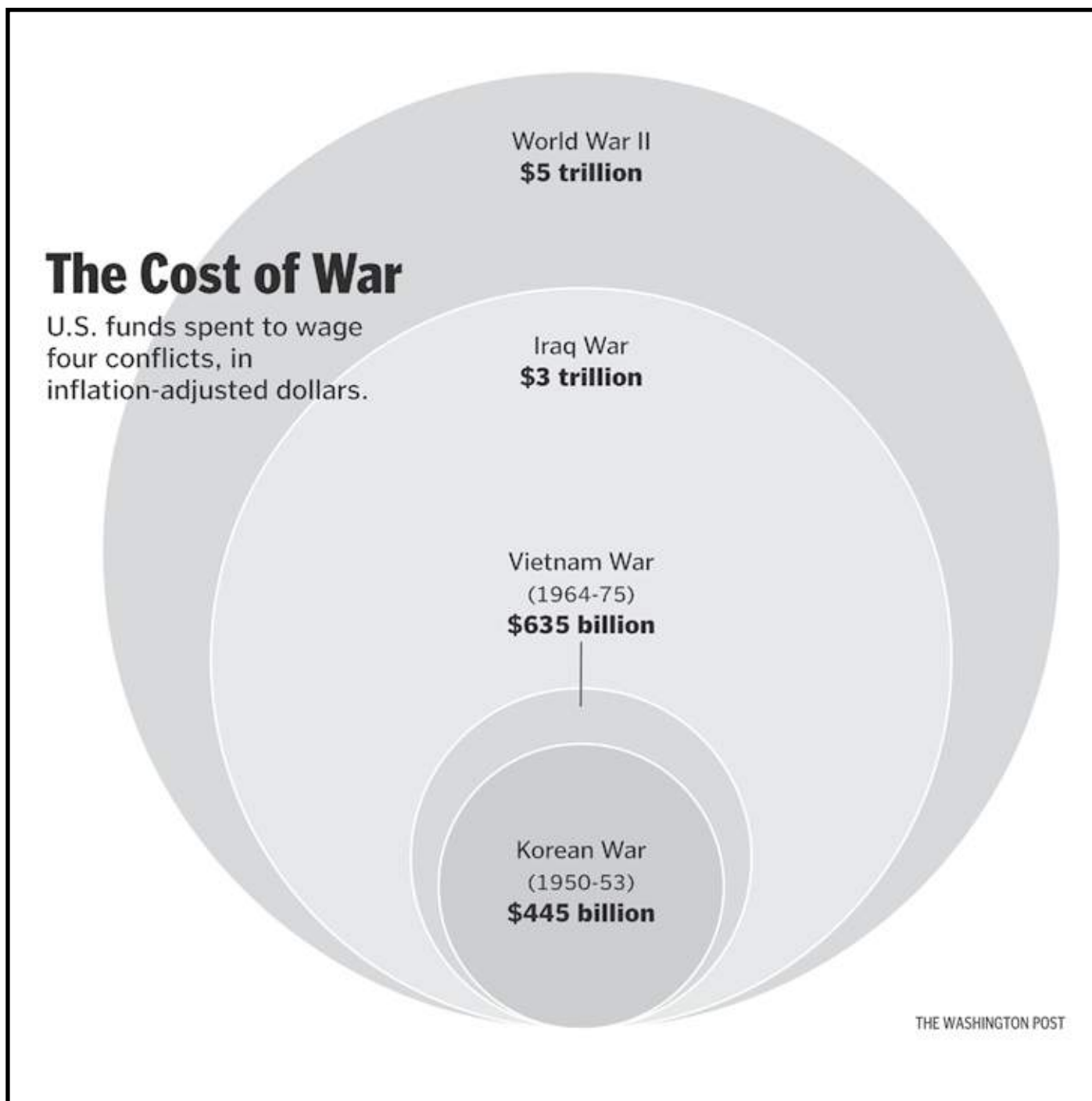
But beyond this is the cost to the already sputtering U.S. economy. All told, the bill for the Iraq war is likely to top \$3 trillion. And that's a conservative estimate.

President Bush tried to sell the American people on the idea that we could have a war with little or no economic sacrifice. Even AFTER the United States went to war, Bush and Congress cut taxes, especially on the rich—even though the United States already had a massive deficit. So the war had to be funded by more borrowing. By the end of the Bush administration, the cost of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, plus the cumulative interest on the increased borrowing used to fund them, will have added about \$1 trillion to the national debt.

The long-term burden of paying for the conflicts will curtail the country's ability to tackle other urgent problems, no matter who wins the presidency in November. Our vast and growing indebtedness inevitably makes it harder to afford new health-care plans, make large-scale repairs to crumbling roads and bridges, or build better-equipped schools. Already, the escalating cost of the wars has crowded out spending on virtually all other discretionary federal programs, including the National Institutes of Health, the Food and Drug Administration, the Environmental Protection Agency, and federal aid to states and cities, all of which have been scaled back significantly since the invasion of Iraq.

To make matters worse, the U.S. economy is facing a recession. But our ability to implement a truly effective economic-stimulus package is crimped by expenditures of close to \$200 billion on the two wars this year alone and by a skyrocketing national debt.

The United States is a rich and strong country, but even rich and strong countries squander trillions of dollars at their peril. Think what a difference \$3 trillion could make for so many of the United States'—or the world's—problems. We could have had a Marshall Plan to help desperately poor countries, winning the hearts and maybe the minds of Muslim nations now gripped by anti-Americanism. In a world with millions of illiterate children, we could have achieved literacy for all—for less than the price of a month's com-



bat in Iraq. We worry about China's growing influence in Africa, but the upfront cost of a month of fighting in Iraq would pay for more than doubling our annual current aid spending on Africa.

Closer to home, we could have funded countless schools to give children locked in the underclass a shot at decent lives. Or we could have tackled the massive problem of Social Security, which Bush began his second term hoping to address; for far, far less than the cost of the war, we could have ensured the solvency of Social Security for the next half a century or more.

Economists used to think that wars were good for the economy, a notion born out of memories of how the massive spending of World War II helped bring the United States and the world out of the Great Depression. But we now know far better ways to stimulate an economy—ways that quickly improve citizens' well-being and lay the foundations for future growth. But money spent paying Nepalese workers in Iraq (or even Iraqi ones) doesn't stimulate the U.S. economy the way that money spent at home would—and it certainly doesn't provide the basis for long-term growth the way investments in research, education or infrastructure would.

Another worry: This war has been particularly hard on the economy because it led to a spike in oil prices. Before the 2003 invasion, oil cost less than \$25 a barrel, and futures markets expected it to remain around there. (Yes, China and India were growing by leaps and bounds, but cheap supplies from the Middle East were expected to meet their demands.) The war changed that equation, and oil prices recently topped \$100 per barrel.

While Washington has been spending well beyond its means, others have been saving—including the oil-rich countries that, like the oil companies, have been among the few winners of this war. No wonder, then, that China, Singapore and many Persian Gulf emirates have become lenders of last resort for troubled Wall Street banks, plowing in billions of dollars to shore up Citigroup, Merrill Lynch and other firms that burned their fingers on subprime mortgages. How long will it be before the huge sovereign wealth funds controlled by these countries begin buying up large shares of other U.S. assets?

The Bush team, then, is not merely handing over the war to the next administration; it is also bequeathing deep economic problems that have been seriously exacerbated by reckless war financing. We face an economic downturn that's likely to be the worst in more than a quarter-century.

Until recently, many marveled at the way the United States could spend hundreds of billions of dollars on oil and blow through hundreds of billions more in Iraq with what seemed to be strikingly little short-run impact on the economy. But there's no great mystery here. The economy's weaknesses were concealed by the Federal Reserve, which pumped in liquidity, and by regulators that looked away as loans were handed out well beyond borrowers' ability to repay them. Meanwhile, banks and credit-rating agencies pretended that financial alchemy could convert bad mortgages into AAA assets, and the Fed looked the other way as the U.S. household-savings rate plummeted to zero.

It's a bleak picture. The total loss from this economic downturn—measured by the disparity between the economy's actual output and its potential output—is likely to be the greatest since the Great Depression. That total, itself well in excess of \$1 trillion, is not included in our estimated \$3 trillion cost of the war.

Others will have to work out the geopolitics, but the economics here are clear. Ending the war, or at least moving rapidly to wind it down, would yield major economic dividends.






As we head toward November, opinion polls say that voters' main worry is now the economy, not the war. But there's no way to disentangle the two. The United States will be paying the price of Iraq for decades to come. The price tag will be all the greater because we tried to ignore the laws of economics—and the cost will grow the longer we remain.

Bilmes, a former chief financial officer at the Commerce Department, teaches at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government. Stiglitz, a professor at Columbia University, served as chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers under President Bill Clinton. They are co-authors of The Three Trillion Dollar War: The True Cost of the Iraq Conflict.

Sattelite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
				
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲85° ▼76°	▲83° ▼75°	▲84° ▼76°	▲84° ▼76°	▲85° ▼74°

Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Mostly Cloudy	▲85 ▼78
Palau	Thunderstorms	▲85 ▼77
Yap	Thunderstorms	▲85 ▼77
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	▲88 ▼77
Pohnpei	Showers	▲85 ▼72
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	▲85 ▼74
Majuro	Cloudy	▲85 ▼75

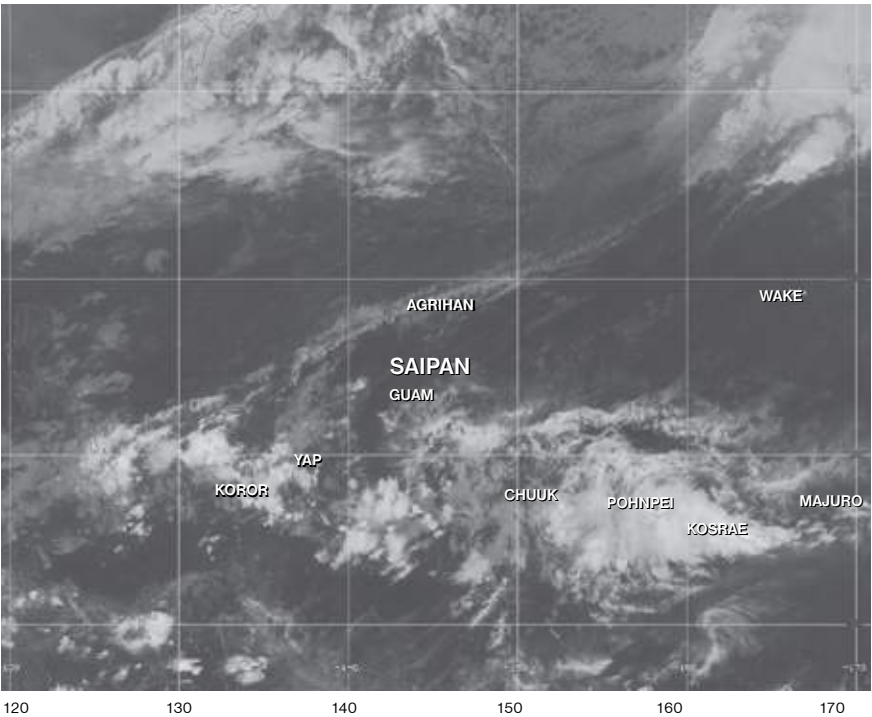
Around The Globe

Auckland	Mostly Sunny	▲71 ▼64
Beijing	Sunny	▲58 ▼40
Hong Kong	Mostly Cloudy	▲76 ▼69
Honolulu	Sunny	▲84 ▼70
London	Rain	▲54 ▼43
Los Angeles	Showers	▲64 ▼48
Manila	Cloudy	▲86 ▼76
Melbourne	Sunny	▲94 ▼79
Miami	Mostly Sunny	▲87 ▼71
New York	Cloudy	▲49 ▼37
Osaka	Sunny	▲58 ▼43
Paris	Showers	▲58 ▼43
Pusan	Mostly Sunny	▲61 ▼41
Rome	Partly Sunny	▲65 ▼46
Salem	Showers	▲50 ▼34
San Francisco	Showers	▲59 ▼43
Seoul	Cloudy	▲52 ▼34
Tokyo	Showers	▲61 ▼46
Washington, DC	Showers	▲57 ▼36

Tides

Saipan Harbor		
3:34AM Today	High Tide:	1.6 Feet
7:47AM Today	Low Tide:	1.4 Feet
12:25PM Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet
8:47PM Today	Low Tide:	0.2 Feet

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, FRIDAY, MAR. 14, 2008

Western North Pacific between Equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A series of trade-wind disturbances embedded within the mean flow of a large area of trade-wind convergence is causing three distinct areas of scattered shower and isolated thunderstorm activity, all south 12N. The first area is northwest of Palau and extends up to 100 miles northwest of a line that stretches from 7N132E to 10N135E. The second area is east of Yap and is bounded by a line from 4N144E to 8N137E to 12N143E to 7N147E back to 4N144E. The final area is within a band from 2N to 8N between 149E and 155E and from 3N to 6N between 155E and 165E, this includes Chuuk, Pohnpei and Kosrae.

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:25AM	6:27PM
Sunday	6:24AM	6:27PM
Monday	6:23AM	6:28PM
Tuesday	6:23AM	6:28PM
Wednesday	6:22AM	6:28PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	12:28PM	2:04AM*
Sunday	1:30PM	2:57AM*
Monday	2:31PM	3:45AM*
Tuesday	3:28PM	4:27AM*
Wednesday	4:22PM	5:06AM*

*Following Day

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

- PICTURES**
 - ISLAND SNAPSHOTS Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
 - BIRTHDAY GREETINGS A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
 - BUSINESS Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
 - SAMUT SARI Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
 - TRAVELOGUE Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.
- ANNOUNCEMENTS**
 - COMMUNITY BRIEFS

- Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

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For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when),

- the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

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- E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com or jayvee_vallejera@saipantribune.com.
- Fax: (670) 235-3740
- Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
- Drop off: 2nd Floor, CIC Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF MARCH 9, 2008

DEPARTURES	ARRIVALS
Saipan-Rota CO 9313 8:30am 9:05am 3,4,7	Rota-Saipan CO 9598 11:10am 11:45am 1,2,6
Saipan-Guam CO9317 4:00am 4:50am Daily CO9597 8:30am 9:20am 1,2,5,6 CO9313 8:30am 10:00am 3,4,7 via Rota CO9601 12:30pm 1:20pm Daily CO9603 3:30pm 4:20pm Daily CO9605 6:30pm 7:20pm Daily CO9599 9:30pm 10:20pm Daily	Guam-Saipan CO 9316 2:30am 3:20am Daily CO9596 7:00am 7:50am Daily CO9598 10:15am 11:45am 1,2,6 via Rota CO9600 10:45am 11:35am 3,4,5,7 CO9602 2:00pm 2:50pm Daily CO9604 5:00pm 5:50pm Daily CO9606 8:00pm 8:50pm Daily
Saipan-Narita NW 078 8:25am 1:30pm Daily via Nagoya NW 075 4:50pm 7:30pm Daily	Narita-Saipan NW 076 10:35am 3:05pm Daily NW 077 6:15pm 1:10am+1 Daily via Nagoya
Saipan-Osaka NW 083 4:20pm 7:10pm Daily	Osaka-Saipan NW 084 10:30am 3:05pm Daily
Saipan-Nagoya NW 078 8:40am 11:25am Daily	Nagoya-Saipan NW 077 9:00pm 1:25am+1 Daily
Saipan-Manila CO 895 4:45pm 6:35pm 6 CO 895 6:45pm 8:35pm 3	Manila-Saipan CO 890 9:15am 2:55pm 6 CO 890 11:45am 5:35pm 3
Saipan-Seoul OZ 604 2:10am 6:00am 1 OZ 604 2:40am 6:30am 2,3,4,5,6,7 OZ 606 3:30pm 7:00pm 2,4,6,7	Seoul-Saipan OZ 605 9:00am 2:30pm 2,4,6,7 OZ 603 7:40pm 1:00am+1 7 OZ 603 8:10pm 1:30am+1 1,2,3,4,5,6
Saipan-Busan OZ 608 4:00am 7:35am 1,4,5,7	Busan-Saipan OZ 607 9:30pm 2:50am+1 3,4,6,7
Saipan-Guanzhou CZ 3008 5:00am 8:00am 2,6	Guanzhou-Saipan CZ 3007 8:00pm 4:00am+1 1,5
Saipan-Shanghai MU 590 4:20am 7:00am 2,6	Shanghai-Saipan MU 589 8:05pm 3:00am+1 1,5
Guam-Manila CO 891 6:00am 10:30am 3 via Yap and Koror CO 893 6:30am 8:05am 6 CO 893 8:25am 10:00am 2,7 CO 893 5:50pm 9:10pm 5 via Koror CO 933 7:00pm 8:40pm Daily PR 111 6:00am 7:45am 1,2,4,6,7	Manila-Guam CO 894 11:20am 4:55pm 2,7 CO 894 7:45pm 1:20am+1 6 CO 892 9:45pm 6:30am+1 3 via Koror and Yap CO 892 10:10pm 5:30am+1 5 via Koror CO 934 10:55pm 4:30am+1 Daily PR 110 10:15pm 4:00am+1 1,3,5,6,7
Guam-Hongkong CO 909 6:50pm 9:35pm 1,5	Hongkong-Guam CO 910 10:35pm 5:15am+1 1,5
Guam-Rota CO 9598 10:15am 10:45am 1,2,6	Rota-Guam CO 9313 9:30am 10:00am 3,4,7
Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; PR: Philippine Airlines; CZ: China Southern; CA: Air China; NW: Northwest; JO: Japan Airlines; OZ: Asiana; MU: China Eastern ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)	

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota			
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily
Guam-Rota			
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily
Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily



NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

Schedule of Religious Services										
CATHOLIC										
Mt. Carmel Cathedral Sunday Mass: 6am, 9am, 11am and 6pm Monday-Saturday: 6am Wednesday: 6am and 6pm										
Korean Center Sunday: 10:30am Wednesday: 10am Thursday-Friday: 8pm Saturday: 3pm and 7:30pm										
Kristo Rai Parish Sunday Mass: 6am, 8am and 9:30am Monday- Saturday: 6am Wednesday: 6am and 6pm Saturday: 6am and 6pm										
Nuestra Senora De Soledad Parish Wednesday Mass: 6pm First Friday Healing Mass: 6pm Saturday Mass: 6pm Sunday Masses: 7:30am & 9am										
Saint Jude Parish Sunday: 6am, 8am, 10am Wednesday and Thursday: 6pm										
San Antonio Parish Sunday: 6am and 8am Tuesday and Friday: 6pm										
San Francisco de Borja-Rota Sunday: 6am and 8am Monday-Saturday: 6am Wednesday: 6pm										
San Isidro-Rota Sunday: 5am and 10am Monday-Wednesday: 7pm Thursday-Saturday: 5am and 7pm										
San Jose (Oleai) Parish Sunday: 6am and 7:30am Tuesday-Wednesday and Friday-Saturday: 6pm										
San Roque Parish Sunday: 9am Wednesday: 6pm Saturday: 10:30am										
San Vicente Parish Sunday: 6am, 9am and 6pm Monday-Saturday: 6pm										
Santa Remedios Sunday: 7:30am Tuesday: 6pm Saturday: 10am-Baptism										
Santa Soledad Sunday: 7:30am										
PROTESTANT										
Born Again Christian (Upper Room Int'l Ministries), Saipan Wednesday Prayer and Healing Night: 8-10:30pm Saturday Tagalog Service: 8-10:30pm Sunday English Service: 9:30-11am Sunday School for Children: 10-11am Sunday Filipino Service: 7-9pm										
Calvary Baptist Church, Saipan Sunday School: 9am Sunday Morning Worship: 10am Sunday Evening Worship: 6pm Wednesday Prayer Service: 7pm										
Chinese Christian Church of Saipan Worship Services: Sunday, 10am and 7:30pm Bible Study: Tuesday-Friday, 9:25pm										
Cornerstone Christian Church, Saipan Worship/Study Opportunities Adult Sunday School: 9am Youth Sunday School: 9am English Worship Service Sunday: 10am Sunday Service: 5:30pm Worship/Fellowship Sunday: 9:30pm Evangelism/Follow-up: Sunday/Monday: 1:30/7:30pm Worship Team: Monday/Saturday-9pm; Cell Groups Tuesday: 7:30pm Mid-week Service: 7:30pm Prayer Meeting Wednesday: 7:30pm Leader's Bible Study Friday: 7:30 pm Cornerstone School of Ministry Saturday: 7:30pm										
Episcopal/Anglican Church on Saipan St. Paul's Episcopal Church Worship Service Sunday: Holy Communion 9:00am Place: Vicarage, Chalan Laulau, Call 235-0545 for directions										
Grace Christian Assembly, Saipan Worship Service: 9am GBI Classes: 4-6pm Prayer Meeting: Monday-Saturday: 6am Sunday: 7am Home Cell Bible Study: Wednesday-Friday: 7pm Youth Service: Friday: 5:30pm										
Iglesia Ni Cristo, Saipan Wednesday: 7:45pm (Tagalog) Thursday: 5:30am (English); 7:45 pm (English) Saturday: 5:30am (Tagalog); 7:45pm (Tagalog) Sunday: 6:45am (English) Children Worship Service: Sunday, 9am (English)										
Immanuel United Methodist Church Koblerville Sunday Services 8:00 AM Choir Rehearsal 9:00 AM Family Worship 3:00 PM Choir Rehearsal Wednesdays at Parsonage 7:00 PM Prayer, Share and Care										
Immanuel Methodist Church (Filipino Congregation) Sunday: 7:00am-Choir Rehearsal 8:00am-Church Service										
(Tagalog) 9:15am-Sunday School Wednesday: 8:00pm-Prayer Meeting Thursday: 7:30pm-Choir Practice (Church) Saturday: 8:00pm-Choir Practice (Parsonage)										
Jesus is Lord Church, Saipan English Service: 9-11am, Sunday Tagalog Service: 6-8pm, Sunday										
Korean Presbyterian Church, Saipan Sunday School: 8:20am Sunday Adult: 10am Sunday Adult: 11:30am Sunday Evening: 7:30pm Wednesday: 8pm										
Life in the Son Christian Fellowship, Saipan Sunday Worship Service: 10am-12noon Tuesday: Leadership Institute 7pm-10pm Wednesday: Corporate prayer 7pm-8pm Last Friday of the month-prayer: 7pm-11pm Friday: Youth on Fire: 7pm-9pm Tel. No. 235-LIFE (5433)										
Marianas Baptist Church, Saipan English Worship Service: 9-10:30am Evening Worship Service: 6-7pm Children Sunday School: 9-10:30am Tagalog Sunday School: 11am-12pm English Sunday School: 11am-12pm Korean Worship Service: 11am-12pm Wednesday Prayer Meeting: English, 7pm-8pm Korean: 8:30pm-9:30pm										
Missions Connection Ministry Every Sunday Celebrations: 10am (English), 6pm (Tagalog) Wednesday Bible Study: 7pm Youth Impact Friday: 7pm Saturday Prayer Meeting: 7pm										
Northern Marianas Christian Church Sunday Worship Service 10am Fina Sisú Housing FS#1 (Child care will be provided) Friday Services @ 7pm Fina Sisú FS#1 for more info pls. contact Ryan 484-2620										
Saipan Bible Fellowship Church Sunday School: 9:30-10am Divine Worship: 10am-11:30am Evening Service: 7pm-8:30pm Wednesday Prayer Meeting: 8pm-9pm										
Saipan Christian Church Sunday: 7:30am-10am Sunday: 6:30 pm -9pm Monday: 8 pm -10pm (Prayer Meeting) Thursday: 8pm-10pm (Cell Groups)										
Saipan Church of Christ Sunday Bible Class: 9am Sunday Worship: 10am Sunday Worship English: 6pm Sunday Worship Tagalog: 7pm Wednesday Bible Study: 7:30pm										
Saipan Community Church (Sunday Services) Palau Service: 7:30am-9am English Service: 10am-11:30am Chuukese Service: 1pm-2:30pm Filipino Service: 5:00pm-7:00pm										
Seventh-Day Adventist Church, Saipan (Saturday Church Services) Sabbath School Program: 9-10am Lesson Study: 10-10:40am Divine Service: 11-12pm Visitation: 3-4pm Adventist Youth Program: 4:30-5:30pm Sundown Worship: 6-7pm										
First Baptist Church (Formerly Saipan Baptist Church) Alfeta St., San Antonio Sunday <table><tr><td>9am</td><td>Sunday school</td></tr><tr><td>10am</td><td>Regular worship</td></tr><tr><td>6pm</td><td>worship</td></tr></table> Wednesday <table><tr><td>7pm</td><td>worship</td></tr></table> Everyone is warmly welcome to attend our worship services. Transportation is readily available to anyone who needs a ride to our church. For further information, please call Pastor David M. Mclure at 234-1939/235-7779.			9am	Sunday school	10am	Regular worship	6pm	worship	7pm	worship
9am	Sunday school									
10am	Regular worship									
6pm	worship									
7pm	worship									
Thy Word Ministries Saipan Faith Center Phone 234-0209 New Christian Charismatic Church Service located in Chalan Paio, Beach Road in the Sablan building on the 2nd floor above Subway Sandwiches. Senior Pastors: George & Gail Kamakahi Asst. Pastors: Eric & Penny Sakaguchi Service Times Sunday 10:00am Worship Service Sunday 7pm Discipleship Classes Tuesday 10:00am Bible Studies Tuesday 6:00pm Intercessory Prayer Tuesday 7:00pm Music Practice Wednesday 7:00pm Mid-Week Service Saturday 10:00am Evangelism										
Upper Room International Ministries Sunday 5:30am-6:30am Morning prayer <table><tr><td>7am-9am</td><td>English service</td></tr><tr><td>7am-9am</td><td>Sunday school</td></tr><tr><td>10am-12noon</td><td>English service,</td></tr></table> Koblerville Wednesday 7pm-9pm Prayer meeting Saturday 7pm-9pm Tagalog service Venue: Jason Presbyterian Church Gualo Rai, Saipan			7am-9am	English service	7am-9am	Sunday school	10am-12noon	English service,		
7am-9am	English service									
7am-9am	Sunday school									
10am-12noon	English service,									
Victory Chapel Christian Fellowship Church Sunday School: 9:30am Sunday AM Worship:10:30am Sunday PM Worship:7:00am Wed Worship: 7:30pm Prayer 45 min. Prior to Service Times Morning Prayer: 6-8am M-S										

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

March 15, 1999

Probe unnerves NMC
Anxiety, fear and anger have crept into the campus of the Northern Marianas College stemming from its weak financial shape and allegations of mismanagement that have been a subject of investigation by the House of Representatives for the past one and half a month. This was revealed by middle managers and officials of the community college during the oversight hearing held on Friday which, shifting its inquiry approach, delved for the first time into what they thought should be done to improve NMC.

Govt may dip into rebate fund
Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio is planning to tap part of the money deposited in the special rebate trust account to raise some \$5 million to \$6 million for the payment of the Earned Income Credit which release have been held up since last year due to funding problem. The governor said his financial advisers are seriously looking into the possibility of setting aside funds from the rebate trust account in order to facilitate the release of EIC.

Hiring freeze stays despite 3-year limit
Despite protests from the business community, Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio said the moratorium on the hiring of non-residents will stay even with the implementation of a controversial law mandating the exit of foreign workers from the Commonwealth after three years of employment. The governor set aside appeals raised by the private sector for reprieve to ease business operations and preserve quality of service, particularly in the hotel industry, saying the measures were intended to encourage employers to hire local residents.

March 15, 2000

House eyes IT potential of CNMI
The House leadership under Speaker Benigno R. Fitial is eyeing Asian companies to develop information technology (IT) industry in the CNMI in a bid to boost the local economy, according to his memorandum issued to members of the lower chamber. It cites several advantages of the Commonwealth that can attract IT investors here, including its duty-free access to the U.S.—the biggest market for both software and hardware components of the sector.

Teno seeks ban on laundry detergents
Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio has asked the Legislature to enact legislation that will ban the use of laundry detergents containing phosphate in the CNMI to protect the island's fragile ecosystem. House Speaker Benigno R. Fitial said the governor may invoke his authority to issue an executive order that will lead to the ban on importation of these detergent products or the legislative branch can pass a measure.

CNMI protests GTE-Bell Atlantic merger plan
The CNMI government has protested the planned transfer of licenses of GTE Corporation and its subsidiaries to Bell Atlantic Corporation, saying the move would deny local residents access to telecommunications services at rates similar to urban areas in the U.S. mainland. Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio has petitioned the Federal Communication Commission to deny the application sought by the telephone firms for consent of the transfer.

March 15, 2001

Task Force formed to stop prostitution
Dire need forced Commonwealth leaders to take another shot at navigating a potent solution that would finally put a halt to a series of illegal rackets especially prolific at Saipan's focal business district. Governor Pedro P. Tenorio disclosed yesterday of a government-initiated plan that organized Tuesday a special task force dedicated at eradicating blots of illicit operations enterprised by certain groups and individuals in the Western Garapan area.

Gov't settles \$1.1M CUC debt
Payment by the CNMI government of its \$1.1 million delinquent balance to the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation paved the road for the restoration of power in 99 public offices on Tinian and Rota. Utility personnel were mobilized to begin reconnection works late yesterday afternoon to ensure complete and uninterrupted operations of government offices on Rota and Tinian today, said CUC corporate communication special advisor Pamela Mathis.

Business

Gold hits \$1,000 an ounce

NEW YORK (AP)—Gold, which has soared to record levels in the past year, hit a new milestone Thursday, rising to \$1,000 an ounce for the first time in futures trading—a boon for investors, but a deterrent to consumers shopping for jewelry.

The price of gold has jumped nearly 20 percent since the start of the year after rising nearly 32 percent in 2007. The huge advance is mainly the result of a weaker dollar and record-high crude oil prices. The dollar fell below 100 yen Thursday for the first time in 12 years and hit another new low against the euro, while oil traded above \$110 a barrel Thursday.

Lower interest rates—and the prospect of more cuts—bringing the dollar's value down makes dollar-based commodities like gold cheaper for foreign buyers. The weak currency has also made gold more attractive because the metal is a hedge against inflation.

“Interest rates are low and that doesn't help our dollar,” said Scott Meyers, senior trading

Sales, dollar plunge; oil soars

WASHINGTON (AP)—Oil hit a record high, the dollar sank again, and consumers stopped buying pretty much everything.

Stocks kept gyrating, too, on Thursday, swinging between gloomy recession evidence and rising hopes that all the bad news would bring another aggressive cut in interest rates when the Federal Reserve meets next week.

The Bush administration, conceding the economy was facing “difficult” times now, rushed out new proposals aimed at next time - plans to fix various problems that have led to a severe crisis in credit markets.

Administration officials predicted an economic rebound once the impact of the Fed's credit cuts and the recently

Stocks rise after S&P report

NEW YORK (AP)—A fractious Wall Street rebounded from an early plunge to finish moderately higher Thursday, after Standard & Poor's predicted financial companies are nearing the end of the massive asset write-downs that have devastated the stock and credit markets.

The S&P projection gave investors some hope that the seemingly unrelenting losses from the mortgage and credit crisis might indeed be bottoming out. Standard & Poor's Ratings Services said it estimates writedowns of subprime asset-backed securities could reach \$285 billion globally, up from its previous projection of \$265 billion, but added that “the end of write-downs is now in sight for large financial institutions.”

“The S&P comment was a positive for the market be-

analyst with Pioneer Futures, a division of MF Global.

After topping \$1,001 on the New York Mercantile Exchange, gold for April delivery fell back to settle at \$993.80 an ounce on Thursday.type:bold,italic; Analysts say gold could still go higher, especially if the Federal Reserve cuts interest rates again next week as expected.

When gold becomes more expensive on futures markets, it doesn't immediately translate into higher prices for jewelry. But in the long term, the price tags on gold rings, bracelets and necklaces do go up. Exactly when the increases from this latest jump will show up on price tags depends at least in part on a retailer's size.

Big retailers like Tiffany & Co. and those that sell jewelry to large department stores order products up to a year in advance and keep more in stock. Those stores likely didn't pay as much for the jewelry when they ordered it, so they wouldn't need to raise prices as quickly to offset costs.

passed economic stimulus package begin to be felt.

Private analysts were not as confident, worrying that the economy is being hit by multiple blows and noting that some of the problems, such as plunging home sales and mortgage defaults, are showing no signs of abating.

“We're in the belly of the recession beast right now and all we really can do is take defensive action,” said Bernard Baumohl, managing director of the Economic Outlook Group.

The Commerce Department reported that consumers, battered by falling home values, job losses, soaring energy costs and a severe credit squeeze, stopped going to the malls in February, triggering a 0.6 percent drop in retail sales.

cause investors were relieved to think that the subprime problem may be behind us,” said Al Goldman, chief market strategist at A.G. Edwards.

Wall Street clearly remains anxious, however. On Tuesday, the stock market launched its largest rally in more than five years after the Federal Reserve said it would auction \$200 billion in Treasurys to help alleviate investment banks' financial bind. But since then, stocks have been extremely volatile.

Kim Caughey, equity research analyst at Fort Pitt Capital Group, said that while she is a market bull, it's possible investors extrapolated a bit too much good news from the S&P report. “I would rather see fewer foreclosures and housing prices bottoming out to decide that the credit crisis is drawing to a close,” she said.

Nation

House closes its doors for spying bill

WASHINGTON (AP)—The House held a closed session Thursday for the first time in 25 years to discuss a hotly contested surveillance bill.

Republicans requested privacy for what they termed “an honest debate” on the new Democratic eavesdropping measure that is opposed by the White House and most Republicans in Congress.

Lawmakers were forbidden to disclose what was said during the hour-long session. The extent to which minds were changed, if at all, should be more clear Friday, when the House was expected to openly debate and then vote on the bill.

Democratic Rep. Sheila Jackson-Lee of Texas said she didn’t believe anyone changed positions but that the session was

useful because no one would be able to complain on Friday that their views had not been heard.

“We couldn’t have gone more of an extra mile to make sure we’re doing the best for national security,” she told The Associated Press.

Rep. Pete Hoekstra of Michigan, the top Republican on the House Intelligence Committee, said in an interview that he

read aloud the titles—but not details—of intelligence reports “that shows the nature of the global threat and how dynamic the situation is, and how fluid.”

Hoekstra said the House discussed the procedures intelligence agencies use to protect the identities of innocent Americans whose calls and e-mails

are incidentally intercepted in wiretaps.

Hoekstra said three Democrats spoke as did eight or nine Republicans.

Severed digits actually give hope to kin

MINNEAPOLIS (AP)—The image turns Patrick Reuben’s stomach: someone cutting off his twin brother’s finger and putting it in a package with other severed digits.

Yet the grim news this week that captors had sent the fingers to U.S. officials has renewed a sense of hope for relatives of Paul Reuben and four other security workers who were kidnapped in Iraq more than a year ago.

“It shows that they’ve been alive recently,” Reuben said Thursday.

The families of the missing workers have gotten little new information in the case, causing frustration and doubt that they will see their loved ones again. That seemed to change with re-

ports that the fingers sent to the U.S. government matched the missing contractors’ DNA.

The FBI and the State Department declined to comment on the matter Thursday. State Department spokesman Sean McCormack said only that officials “continue to demand these hostages’ immediate release so that they can be returned safely to their families.”

A U.S. government official in Washington said the fingers belonged to men abducted in two separate incidents that occurred a month and a half apart. The official spoke only on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak on the record about the matter.

Four of the men—Paul Reuben, of Minneapolis; Jonathon Cote, of Getzville, N.Y.; Joshua Munns, of Redding, Calif.; and Bert Nussbaumer, of Vienna, Austria—were guards for Crescent Security Group when men in Iraqi police uniforms ambushed their convoy near the Kuwaiti border Nov. 16, 2006. The fifth, Ronald J. Withrow, of Lubbock, Texas, was a contractor working for JPI Worldwide when he was abducted Jan. 5, 2007, near Basra.

John Young of Lee’s Summit, Mo., was abducted with Reuben, Cote, Munns and Nussbaumer, but none of Young’s fingers was sent to the U.S. military, the Washington official said.



DO-OVER PRIMARY

Democratic presidential hopeful Sen. Barack Obama D-Ill., walks up the stairs on Capitol Hill in Washington, Thursday, March 13, 2008. Michigan Democrats are close to an agreement with presidential candidates Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton and Obama to hold a do-over primary. Party officials and the campaigns negotiated on Thursday, and state Democratic leaders were hopeful that an agreement could be reached on Friday.

AP

Legal cloud lingers over Spitzer

NEW YORK (AP)—As Gov. Eliot Spitzer prepares to leave office, the disgraced politician faces a tangled battle with prosecutors that will send lawyers into murky legal territory.

A law enforcement official said Spitzer’s high-powered defense team was believed to be negotiating a plea deal with prosecutors over his connection to a high-end prostitution ring, but attorneys were not commenting Thursday about the discussions.

The legal battle occurred as Lt. Gov. David Paterson prepared to take over the state following Spitzer’s spectacular fall from power. Paterson said he spoke to Spitzer on Thursday and “told him how sorry I was this happened.”

“I promised the governor yesterday that I would commit my-

self to the people of this great state, that we would have stability and continue in these challenges that lie ahead,” Paterson said Thursday. “Now we have to get New York back on track.”

Paterson takes over on Monday, and will become New York’s first black governor and the nation’s first legally blind chief executive.

Spitzer, a married father of three teenage girls, faces a much more dubious future after he was accused of spending tens of thousands of dollars on prostitutes—including a tryst with a 22-year-old call girl in Washington the night before Valentine’s Day. Officials said Spitzer initially drew the attention of authorities with suspicious money transfers that will be a key part of any possible criminal case.

Sheriff recommends charge in toilet case

NESS CITY, Kan. (AP)—A man should be charged for allowing his girlfriend to sit on their toilet so long that her body became stuck to the seat, the sheriff said Thursday.

Ness County Sheriff Bryan Whipple was among authorities who discovered the woman last month living in the bathroom of a mobile home she shared with her boyfriend, Kory McFarren.

“The house was cluttered but not in shambles,” he said. “The smell was overpowering - a terrible smell about the house, ob-

viously coming from where she was at.”

McFarren, 36, told police his girlfriend, Pam Babcock, 35, had a phobia about leaving the bathroom and may not have left the bathroom in two years, although he’s unsure how long she was in there.

He said during that time, he brought her food, water, and clean clothes.

“The only thing I am guilty of is I didn’t get her help sooner,” he told The Associated Press on Thursday.



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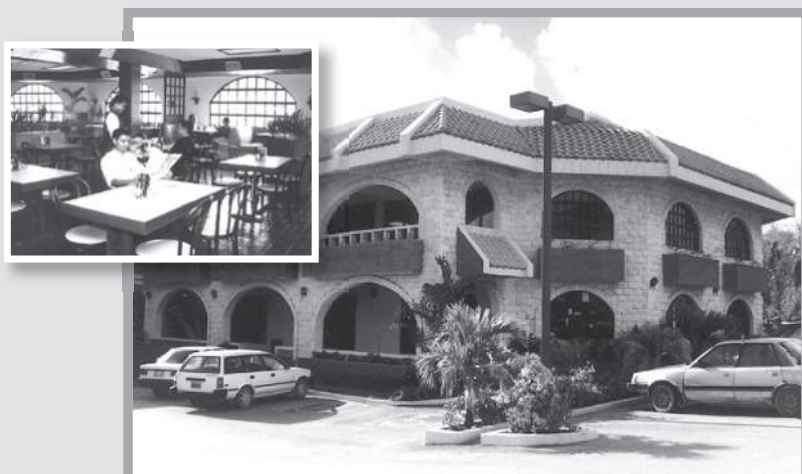
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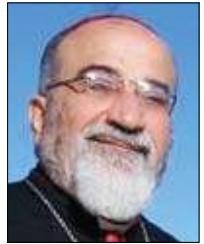
Middle Road, Gualo Rai Branch • Tel. 235-8640

World

Captive archbishop's body is found in Iraq

BAGHDAD (AP)—The body of a Chaldean Catholic archbishop was found in a shallow grave in northern Iraq on Thursday, two weeks after he was kidnapped by gunmen in one of the most dramatic attacks against the country's small Christian community.

The sad discovery of Archbishop Paulos Faraj Rahho's body came on a day that saw more violence elsewhere in Iraq. A parked car bomb exploded in a commercial district of central Baghdad, killing 18 people and wounding dozens more, police said. Gunmen also killed five members of an anti-al-Qaida group near Tikrit, and a correspondent for a newspaper in Baghdad.



Rahho

Pope Benedict XVI, President Bush and Iraq's prime minister all deplored the archbishop's death, with the pontiff calling it an "inhuman act of violence that offends the dignity of the human being and harms the peaceful coexistence of the dear Iraqi people."

Since the U.S.-led invasion in 2003, Iraqi Christians have been targeted by Islamic extremists who label them "crusaders" loyal to U.S. troops. Militants have attacked churches, priests and businesses owned by Christians. Many Christians have fled the country, a trend mirrored in many dwindling pockets of Christianity across the Islamic world.

Rahho, 65, was seized on Feb. 29, just minutes after he delivered a mass in Mosul, a city considered by the U.S. military the last urban stronghold of al-Qaida in Iraq. Three of Rahho's companions were killed.

After two weeks of searching and praying, officials at the archbishop's church received a phone call Wednesday from the captors. The caller told the officials that Rahho had died and where to find his body, Monsignor Shlemon Warduni, the auxiliary bishop of Baghdad, told The Associated Press.

WORLD BRIEFS

Sudan, Chad sign peace deal

DAKAR, Senegal (AP)—The presidents of Sudan and Chad signed a peace agreement Thursday to suppress attacks by armed groups operating along their shared border, a move toward stability in Chad and the battered Darfur region of Sudan. The pact, signed by Sudan's Omar al-Bashir and Chad's Idriss Deby, is meant to end cross-border attacks in the Darfur frontier region and comes even as Chad accused Sudan of backing a new rebel advance into its territory. Sudan denied the charges. If successful, it would also represent a step toward ending violence in Sudan's Darfur region, where a five-year conflict has left more than 200,000 dead and uprooted 2.5 million from their homes.

Russian gets 13 years for girl sex abuse

PHNOM PENH, Cambodia (AP)—A court in Cambodia sentenced a Russian businessman to 13 years in prison Friday for sexually abusing a 14-year-old girl. Judge Ke Sakhan handed down the sentence against 41-year-old developer Alexander Trofimov after convicting him of debauchery, the legal term in Cambodia for sexual offenses against minors. The 14-year-old girl testified during a trial Tuesday at Phnom Penh Municipal Court that Trofimov had sex with her four times in September last year. She said she received \$100 out of \$1,000 the Russian man allegedly paid to a Cambodian broker, Phal Vannara, to bring her to him. The Associated Press generally does not identify victims of sexual assault. Trofimov denied the charge, saying he did not know the girl. But the judge dismissed Trofimov's denial, saying there was adequate proof he had committed the crime. The judge also sentenced Phal Vannara, 34, to 11 years in prison for conspiring to act as the broker who procured the girl.

US sees progress but no NKorean pact

GENEVA (AP)—The United States and North Korea made progress Thursday in overcoming obstacles that have stalled a major nuclear disarmament deal but remained short of a breakthrough, the chief U.S. negotiator said. Assistant U.S. Secretary of State Christopher Hill told reporters that the talks in Geneva were probably the most substantive that Washington has had with North Korea since problems developed in December over disarming Pyongyang's nuclear weapons program. "We certainly are further along in this consultation than we were when I arrived this morning," Hill said after meetings with North Korean Vice Foreign Minister Kim Kye Gwan. "There has been progress." Hill said he wanted to report to U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice before going into more detail.

Al-Qaida sets deadline for held tourists

CAIRO, Egypt (AP)—Al-Qaida's branch for North Africa on Thursday set a three-day deadline to meet conditions for the release of two Austrian tourists it claimed to have kidnapped in Tunisia last month.

In a statement posted on the Internet—which included six photographs purportedly showing Austrians Wolfgang Ebner and Andrea Kloiber—al-Qaida in Islamic North Africa said it would free the pair if all of the group's members were released from jails in Tunisia and Algeria. The posting gave Austrian authorities three days, starting midnight Thursday, to comply.

The statement, the authenticity of which could not be independently verified although it was posted on a Web site linked to the group, also called on Western tourists to avoid visiting the Maghreb region in northern Africa.

"Austria is responsible for the lives of the two hostages in the event of the expiration of the time period and not responding to our demands," it said and urged families of the two Austrians to pressure their government to meet the group's demands.

The woman in the photographs, said to be Kloiber, was shown wearing a headscarf and

her face was obscured. According to extremist Islamist beliefs, showing a woman's face in public and in images is prohibited. Both she and the man, who had a graying mustache and a short beard, were wearing traditional Arab robes.

The statement also said the Austrian government has been informed of the kidnappers' demands and that they had handed over to unnamed "negotiators" a list of detained members they want released. There were no details on how many names were listed.

"You are interested in the safety of your citizens," the

group said, addressing Austria. "We are also interested in the release of our brothers."

On Monday, the al-Qaida branch first said in an audio recording that it was behind the Feb. 22 kidnapping of the two tourists, saying it was an act of retribution for Western cooperation with Israel. The statement claimed the hostages were in good health.

Relatives reported the pair missing when they did not return from a vacation to Tunisia on March 1. The two were last heard from on Feb. 18 and failed to make a planned phone call to Ebner's son on Feb. 25.

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Maharlika – PinoyNews

OFW boycotts in the works

By MIKO L. MORELOS
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Different OFW groups, including the militant Migrante, recently called for a “Zero Remittance day” to dramatize their protest against President Macapagal-Arroyo in connection with the scandal-ridden \$329-million National Broadband Network deal with China’s ZTE Corp.

Maita Santiago, Migrante International secretary general, said in a statement that the boycott would go on monthly as the group urges more OFWs around

EXCHANGE RATES	
DOLLAR	PESO
\$1.00	= P41.577

the world not to send money to the Philippines on certain days.

“That amounts to more than \$30 million daily. Secretary Romulo Neri acknowledged that through our remittances, we are treated by Arroyo as an ‘exhaust valve’ for her bankrupt economy. We will no longer stand idly by while she relies on us to prop up her ailing economy,” Santiago said.

Meanwhile a US-based net-

work of migrant workers groups is pressing remittance pioneer Western Union take up a covenant with migrant organizations, with the company promising “genuine” community reinvestment aside from lower money transfer fees and reasonable exchange rates.

Transnational Institute for Grassroots Research and Action has been pressing Western Union to espouse “a written policy for community reinvestment that would prioritize building social capital in immigrant communities,” says its executive director Francis Calputura, a Filipino-American.

Nominees sought for '08 Phil. Presidential Awards

The Philippine Consulate General is now accepting nominations for the Year 2008 Presidential Awards for Filipino Individuals and Organizations Overseas.

The Presidential Awards is a biennial search to recognize exceptional individuals and organizations for their outstanding contributions to Philippine progress and development. The

awards are also conferred on overseas Filipinos who have shown excellence and distinction in their work or profession.

Instituted in 1991, it has so far been conferred on 283 overseas-based individuals and organizations.

Further information on the evaluation criteria for the awards categories, as well as nomination forms, may be ob-

tained from the Philippine Consulate General at the 5th Floor, Marianas Business Plaza.

The Philippine Consulate General will accept completed nomination forms with supporting documents no later than May 9, 2008, to allow enough time for the documents to be endorsed and forwarded to the Commission on Filipinos Overseas prior to the deadline. (PR)

OFWs urged to renew OWWA membership

Filipino workers with legal work status in the CNMI are being reminded to renew their OWWA membership to ensure that they will continue to receive the benefits of being a member.

The membership fee amounts to just \$25 per year. Those who failed to renew for several years shall not be required to pay the accumulated contributions for

those past years.

An OWWA member is entitled to the following benefits and services:

- 1) Life insurance coverage (inclusive of burial benefit)
 - Natural death, P120,000
 - Accidental death, P220,000
- 2) Disability and dismemberment benefits
- 3) Total disability benefit

- 4) Education and training benefits
- 5) Social services and family welfare assistance
- 6) Workers assistance and on-site services

For more information, call the OWWA hotlines at 235-3411/235-6992, or e-mail polo@pticom.com, owwa_saipan@yahoo.com. (PR)

LABOR FRONT

Transferring to new employer

By FERDIE P. DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Q: How many days is an alien worker given to transfer to a new employer?

A: The Labor administrative hearing officer’s order granting a foreign worker’s transfer to secure new employment should not be longer than 30 days from the date of the order, according to the new Alien Labor Rules and Regulations. However the 30-day period can be extended if the hearing officer makes specific findings of exigent circumstances requiring a longer period.

Q: What are the required documents that should be included in the Labor administrative hearing officer’s transfer order?

A: The order granting an alien worker transfer should include a referral to Labor Employment Services so that available positions for foreign national workers can first be filed by alien workers already in the CNMI. The order should also attach a copy of the current Barred List so that the foreign worker knows which employers cannot employ transfers. A copy of any order grant-

ing a transfer should be transmitted by the Labor Administrative Hearing Office to Labor Employment Services within three days of issuance.

Q: What is a whistleblower relief?

A: According to the new Alien Labor Rules and Regulations, in order to promote the public interest in securing compliance with Commonwealth law, an alien worker who provides Labor with information on the basis of which a compliance agency case is concluded successfully may be granted a transfer by a hearing officer even if not qualified.

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Pacquiao wins fight against distractions

By GREG BEACHAM
AP SPORTS WRITER

LAS VEGAS (AP)—Bob Arum sometimes thinks every politician in the Philippines is after his five tickets.

Arum, the venerated boxing promoter guiding Manny Pacquiao’s career, can allow just five dignitaries into the ring at Mandalay Bay on Saturday after his beloved fighter’s bout with Juan Manuel Marquez.

The Filipino vice president, cabinet secretaries and enough congressmen to shut down the government all traveled to Las Vegas this week with hopes of getting one of those passes, which would allow them to pose for a post-fight photograph with an unparalleled national hero.

“These politicians aren’t stupid,” said Arum, whose Top Rank offices have been deluged with phone calls. “Aligning with an admired athlete helps their image. Manny is very valuable to them.”

Pacquiao means many things to many people in the Philippines, where focusing on his training can be tougher than any ring battle. He’s just as famous in the expatriate Filipino community in California, where hundreds turned out on short notice in San Francisco and Los Angeles for recent public appearances by their fearless 130-pound (59-kilogram) champion.

“To me, it’s reminiscent of how (Muhammad) Ali was,” Arum said. “It’s mainly with Filipinos, but it’s the same adulation that I remember when I was promoting Ali. He’s a lovely kid. He’s not braggadocious like Ali, but he’s hardly quiet. He’s just a mass of energy and movement.”

Back home, he’s a worshipped champion, a movie star, a celebrity endorser, and a musician who carries his countrymen’s expectations into every bout. But the most famous man in the Philippines can hide in Hollywood, where he spent the last eight weeks in remarkably intense workouts with longtime trainer Freddie Roach.

No acting, no politicking, no basketball—not even family time. At 29, Pacquiao finally seems to realize he can be his own toughest opponent when he allows himself to get distracted.

“It’s hard to be away from my children, but I have



Manny Pacquiao, of the Philippines, trains during a media workout in Las Vegas on Tuesday, March 11, 2008.

goals I want to accomplish,” Pacquiao said last week over lunch in an Irish restaurant in San Francisco, where he ordered chicken, rice and melon while others dined on fish and chips. “I want to be the best I can be, and you have to make sacrifices.”

Pacquiao hasn’t always known that truth. After the business of being Manny clearly interfered with preparations for his last two fights, Pacquiao went back to the basics that made him a star: Hard work, concentration and hunger.

“When I saw my performance in the last two fights, it’s not that hungry Manny Pacquiao when I started boxing, you know? I think I took it easy in my boxing career, so when I realized that, I told myself, ‘Oh, I need to focus because I’m not Manny Pacquiao.’”

Pacquiao and Marquez fought to an entertaining draw in 2004, and the fight provided lessons Pacquiao is still absorbing. He knocked down Marquez three times in the first round, but couldn’t finish off the tenacious Mexican champion, who came back strong in the final 10 rounds.

Critics questioned the clos-

ing instinct of Pacquiao, perhaps the sport’s most electrifying puncher. They also labeled the southpaw as a one-handed fighter and derided his overall technique.

Pacquiao certainly isn’t a one-handed fighter now, and anyone at his last two fights against Erik Morales can see his finishing skills. Roach has been working on a response to every criticism over the last four years, culminating in two months of training that only a veteran trainer can truly appreciate.

Roach believes Pacquiao is close to his peak, reaching a fine synthesis of physical maturity, skills and motivation. Just as important, he has learned to manage his outside interests—though he’s also taking business classes back home, the better to manage his growing financial empire.

“I’ve never seen him in the gym like this before,” Roach said. “It’s like he’s pouring everything into this fight, everything he wants to do with his career. We’re pretty tight, and I like to think I know a lot about him, but this is the best I’ve ever seen him. He’s showing me some things I didn’t realize about him.”

PAL to fly to two more Chinese cities

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Philippine Airlines said Thursday it will open two new routes to China that will bring to five the number of Chinese destinations for the national flag carrier.

In a statement, the airline said it will launch twice-weekly flights from Manila to Chongqing on Friday, and to Chengdu on Tuesday. Both cities are in southwestern China.

The airline already operates daily flights to Shanghai and Xiamen, and five times a week to Beijing.

New Airbus A320 aircraft, which will seat 12 in business class and 144 in economy, will be used for the new flights, the airline said.

China: Worried over controversy on Spratlys

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—China said Thursday it is concerned that controversy over its joint study with the Philippines and Vietnam to find possible petroleum reserves in the disputed South China Sea may harm relations with Manila.

Filipino lawmakers have filed several bills in Congress calling for a probe into the Joint Marine Seismic Undertaking to see if it compromised their country's sovereignty and territorial claims to portions of the Spratly Islands.

The move follows media reports that the agreement covers Philippine territory not even claimed by China, and was allegedly signed in exchange for Chinese loans for overpriced projects.

The three-year seismic survey that ends in June 2008 is intended to detect petroleum reserves in the South China Sea. The possibility of oil and gas revenues is one reason why the remote Spratlys are under such dispute.

An agreement for the study was signed in 2004 by the state-owned Philippine National Oil Corp. and China National Offshore Oil Corp. The Vietnam Oil and Gas Corp. joined in 2005, but three other claimants to the disputed Spratly island chain—Taiwan, Malaysia and Brunei—are excluded.

The study followed the 2002 ASEAN-China Declaration of Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea, which was aimed at avoiding conflict by saying joint activities may be pursued pending resolution of the dispute.

'Arroyo is at center of cover-up'

By VOLT CONTRERAS,
MICHAEL LIM UBAC
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA—Some 80 former Cabinet officials, who have banded together to demand accountability in the scandal-ridden \$329-million National Broadband Network (NBN) contract, Thursday said President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo had "refused" to heed their appeals, leading them to conclude that she was "at the center of the corruption and cover-up" of the aborted deal.

As in their first two public statements, however, the Former Senior Government Officials refrained from making a direct call for Ms Arroyo to resign.

An FSGO member, former Trade Minister Vicente Paterno, even admitted that "we have different preferences" on how or when the President should "leave."

But in a tone and language that former Civil Service Commission chair Karina David described as "appropriate for now," the group sent across a nevertheless piercing message.

"We express our loss of confidence in her. As a consequence, we question not only her moral authority but also her ability to govern, given the mounting garbage of lies and obfuscation that she is constrained to build to cover up the increasing stench of corruption in the government," the FSGO said.

"We conclude that President Macapagal-Arroyo refuses to serve the people's demand for truth about a matter of great public interest," said the statement read by David at Club Filipino in San Juan City.

"We see in this refusal, despite ample chances and many sound reasons, a clear basis for our people to find her complicit with and, in fact, at the center of the corruption and cover-up of the NBN deal," she said.

David also indicated that FSGO is into the campaign for the long haul. The members, she said, have met every Saturday since forming the group in mid-



In this photo released by the Presidential Close-in Photographers Office, PCPO, Malacanang Palace in Manila, Philippine President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, center, waves with students as they take part in a "unity walk" prior to their meeting where they discussed the economy, education and the environment, at Malacanang Palace in Manila, Philippines, Thursday March 13, 2008.

Students walk with Arroyo 'thru the storm'

MANILA, Philippines—The young crowd that thronged Malacañang after the massive gate was swung open by the Presidential Security Group had not been seen for a long time on the Palace grounds.

They were there to walk with President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo Thursday in a "unity walk."

Some 1,000 students, campus leaders and government scholars walked along Ms Arroyo in Malacañang in an attempt to show that she also has her share of youth supporters.

There were no shouts of indignation and calls for her resignation—only applause and cheers as she vowed to fulfill

her promise to put education on top of her agenda in the remainder of her term.

Unity walks have come into vogue among administration supporters amid widespread calls for Ms Arroyo to step down following allegations she and her husband received hefty kickbacks in the aborted \$329-million deal with China to hook up government offices and agencies nationwide via the Internet.

A beaming President joined the students and together they trooped from the Premier Guest House to the Palace.

"This is in support of the President," said Michael Tumang, student council president of Datamex computer school in

Sucat, Parañaque.

"We should help move the country forward," Tumang said, adding that those who have gripes against the President should go to court with their evidence.

Students came from V. Mapa High School, Quirino High School, computer schools Datamex and International Electronic and Technical Institute, Far Eastern University, Assumption College, Sangguniang Kabataan officials from Marikina, Mandaluyong and Pasig, and government scholars, including caregivers, from the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority. (*Philippine Daily Inquirer*)

February and have even already created "clusters" handling political, economic, social, rural development issues and another engaged in "scenario-building."

Former National Treasurer Leonor Briones added: "We should not stop with just focusing on one individual (the President). As senior officials

we should look at the system itself which breeds this kind of practice where you have a parallel government, where you have government by golf, where

important decisions are made outside the halls of government, outside of formal decision making processes but in golf courses and hamburger joints."

Estrada: Legal study shows I can run again

By JIM GOMEZ
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Ousted President Joseph Estrada said Thursday a legal study he commissioned has shown he can still run for office despite a previous conviction for plundering the country's coffers. However, he refused to make his political intentions clear.

Estrada, 70, repeated a call for his predecessor and nemesis, President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, who pardoned him last year, to resign over corruption scandals that have battered her government. Arroyo's pardon freed Es-

trada from six years of detention following his conviction.

Estrada declined to specify his political intentions but said he would be willing to join an interim government if Arroyo is ousted.

Asked if he was considering a run in the 2010 presidential election, Estrada replied, "I have no intention of running now." But he but did not rule out changing his mind.

The constitution bars former presidents from running for office, but Estrada's aides have ar-

gued he may be eligible because his six-year term was abruptly cut in 2001—when a nonviolent "people power" movement toppled him.

He said he has forgiven Arroyo, who helped lead the protests that ousted him.

"I was incarcerated, I was demonized. It was not only the kitchen sink that was thrown on my face but also the toilet bowl," he said.

"I can say that I've forgiven her, but trust is a different story," he said.



Estrada

Estrada said a legal study he commissioned two months ago showed he could take another crack at the presidency but acknowledged that government lawyers contend otherwise. He said he was illegally removed from office and he believes many Filipinos are ready to embrace him again because they have elected his son and wife to the Senate.

Estrada resembled a politician on the campaign trail in his appearance before foreign journalists. The former movie star wore his trademark wristband with the presidential seal and his aides distributed video discs la-

beled "The Return of the Father of the Masses" that showed him happily waving to a multitude of followers.

Estrada said he would continue criticizing Arroyo and joining anti-government protests. He lashed out at her for failing to ease massive poverty and joblessness, which have fueled Muslim and communist insurgencies.

A college dropout who won the Philippine version of a best actor Oscar five times, Estrada made 166 films in a 26-year career.

He became a small-town mayor, senator and vice president before being elected president in 1998.

Maharlika – PinoyStyle

Ara on Aiko's bare-all: I have no bitterness

By BAYANI SAN DIEGO JR.
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—As far as Aiko Melendez is concerned, Jomari Yllana was the best ... but also the worst; Pops Fernandez the most likable and Ara Mina the least.

In a bare-all interview in GMA 7's "Showbiz Central" on Sunday, the actress-politician revisited the triangle that was Aiko-Jomari-Ara and said Pops was her favorite among the women who were ever linked to her ex-husband.

It was quite a mouthful, but Jomari can laugh it off-especially since he's now chummy with both women.

"We've all been through a lot," he told Inquirer Entertainment in a phone interview on Monday. "But we've reached

a certain level of maturity." He was certain that intrigue mongers would expand the issue, but he insisted, "Aiko was just being honest; I respect that."

Best friends

What matters to him, he said, was that he and Aiko were now "best" friends. "It's important to have a good relationship, as parents to our 10-year-old son Andre," he explains.

He said he attended Aiko's recent birthday party and, with Pops, the launch of her bar Mafia in Malate. "They were friends before Pops and I got together," Jomari pointed out.

He was just as glad, he said, to have renewed ties with Ara. "Politics reunited us."

Ara recalled, also in a phone interview: "He called from out of the blue, inviting me to campaign for his brother Anjo last

May. In return, I invited him to my birthday, which was also the miting de avance for my father (Chuck Mathay)."

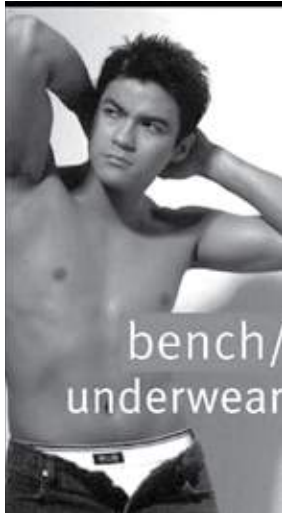
All's fine between Jom and Ara then. What about Ara and Aiko? Jomari said, "It's just a matter of time ... they just need to sit down and talk."

Ara insisted that she had no bitterness in her heart. "That was a long time ago. Let's not dwell on the past. I never said anything against Aiko because she's the mother of Jom's son; I wouldn't hurt anyone who was special to the man I loved."

In Sunday's TV interview, Aiko did clarify that Ara wasn't a favorite, not because she was mean, but because they didn't get the chance to sort out their issues.

In any case, Ara asserted, "Intrigues aren't my priority now. I've too much work." She's juggling the soap "Prinsesa ng Banyera" with shows abroad and premiering the movie "Ate" in Bacolod.

Jomari's just as busy. "I'm still doing 'Palos,'" he said, "and I'm opening my new Rapidé auto service center next month. And I plan to go back to school."



Jomari Yllana

Fairy-tale wedding of the year

By BAYANI SAN DIEGO JR.
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—Because it's not real—before you get all misty-eyed.

But fact and fiction collided in San Agustin Church, in Intramuros, Manila, when Marimar tied the knot with Sergio.

After eight months of vertiginous plot twists, "Marimar" concludes Friday night.

At the finale's taping on Monday, some of the guests actually shed tears, according to GMA Films head Annette Gozon-Abrogar, a secondary sponsor.

Abrogar was one of the real people in the entourage of the telenovela couple portrayed by Marian Rivera and Dingdong Dantes.

Among the principal sponsors were Censors chief Marissa Laguardia, Regal Films producer Lily Monteverde, GMA 7 exec Wilma Galvante, hair salon chain owner Ricky Reyes, talent manager Douglas Quijano and TV host German Moreno. (The show's writers say Imelda Marcos, Jinggoy Estrada, Vilma Santos and Sharon Cuneta were also considered.)

"I've been a ninong in many showbiz weddings but I never thought I'd be part of Mari-



Marian Rivera and Dingdong Dantes will immediately have a follow-up project after Marimar. The two will be the lead stars in GMA-7's new fantaserye, Dyesebel.

mar's," quipped Kuya Germs.

The groom himself has lost count of his onscreen weddings. "At least seven," Dingdong surmised. "To [real-life girlfriend] Karylle once, to [actress] Iza Calzado twice..." It was his first with Marian.

And the new Bench guy couldn't remember how many kisses he shared with Marian at the altar.

"At least four," an observer volunteered.

As expected, there was a commotion in and out of the church. Director Joyce Bernal

was constantly in a rush, trying to finish by 5 p.m. because of a scheduled Mass. "A [real] priest is arriving soon," she told the cast and crew.

A huge delay was caused by a tardy guest, who proceeded to further hold up the taping by taking photos in the middle of the march.

"Stop taking pictures," Direk Joyce barked at the errant one with the authority of a drill sergeant.

Unlike that unrepentant guest, whom a tabloid lambasted the next day, star dogs Fulgoso and Fifi were perfectly behaved.

Wedding singers

The wedding singers—real-life sweethearts Ogie Alcasid and Regine Velasquez—had to rush out after because the former had a "Bubble Gang" taping.

All the fuss and frenzy didn't ruffle the bride, who was a portrait of radiant bliss.

Make that barefoot bliss.

After one take, Marian kicked away her shoes and padded her bejeweled straps with tissue paper. "My shoulders are bruised because of these straps," she told Inquirer Entertainment.

"In real life," she said, "I would like a simple church wedding."

Jolina plays OFW in movie with Gabby

By DOLLY ANNE CARVAJAL
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—Jolina Magdangal's cool dad Tito Jun is excited about Jolen's movie with Gabby Concepcion tentatively titled "Love Cruise," to be shot in Europe. Jolens will be portraying an OFW in a cutesy love triangle with Gabby and Rufa Mae Quinto.

"It's one year in the planning. Originally, it was supposed to be called 'Barcelona,' with Peque Gallaga as the director. But may movie na pala with that title before," says Jolens' dad. "Now it's a co-prod of GMA Films, myself and Vic Alcuaz."

Why Gabby? "He and Jolens hit it off when he was a guest in one of her US concerts. He immediately said yes when we offered him the project."

So it's really more of a Jolens movie and only an incidental comeback vehicle for Gabo. Won't Jolen's fiance Bepong Munoz tag along and guard his

ladylove like a hawk?

"He's busy with his lawyering. Maybe he'll come to Rome where we will be based. No need to make bantay. They have a very secure relationship."

Loyal lawyer keeps Jolina jolly.

'The Debutante'

I had a blast at the taping of QTV's "The Debutante," airing in April. The reality show search for the ultimate "It Girl" is hosted by Marc Nelson. Eighteen gorgeous girls will compete in a series of activities to test their social skills, sense of culture and heritage, confidence and wits.

I teased Marc, "What's an IT girl for you? Do you go for the demure or aggressive ones?" He blushed. "She has to be reserved and daring in equal parts. I would not want a girl who comes on too strong nor a girl who's too quiet that she fades into the background."

He remains on good terms

with his former "It Girl," ex-GF Patricia Javier, who's now happily married in the US. "I visit her whenever I'm in the States. Her baby is my godchild."

Isn't he planning to have his own kid soon and settle down, too? "I'm not entertaining such thoughts yet." The joys of bachelorhood keep Marc entertained for now.

Anthem singer

Ciara Sotto is all agog preparing for her rendition of the "Pambansang Awit" at Manny Pacquiao's next bout in Las Vegas (where she's based). "I am excited and kabado," she said. "But I think it's better to be nervous than complacent. An added pressure is that I'll be performing to the world as a Filipina and not simply as myself."

Her BF Joey's support is all the adrenaline shot she needs. "Even if we are in a long-distance relationship, it seems effortless for us to be thoughtful," she said.

PERSONAL FINANCE

Upfront costs for long-term savings

By RUTH FLORESCA
MONEYSENSE

There are those who believe that if you want to save money, you should try as much as possible not to spend a lot of it. And while it's wise to avoid spending money on things you don't really need, there are things worth purchasing that will pay for themselves eventually. We compiled a list of things you should buy to help save money in the long run:

Efficient home water filtration system

Is your household one of many who still depends on water refilling stations for your drinking water needs despite having a good supply of running water? Consider installing a water filtration system. It may seem costly at the onset, but you'll see how much you'll be spared on water expenses later. Visit different stores and look at different brands. Compute how much you are spending in a month for drinking water. Then calculate the expenses for changing your filter and its other components. These may vary from every six months to as long as every five years. You'll be surprised at the final figures.

Rechargeable batteries and charger

From toys and flashlights to "high-drain" devices like digital cameras or portable DVD players, it must be hard nowadays to find a house without gadgets that need batteries. If you're using a lot of

battery-dependent equipment, you must have already spent a fortune on batteries alone! Invest on Nickel-Metal Hydride (NiMH) rechargeable batteries that have a higher capacity than the old-style Nickel Cadmium. Lithium-ion rechargeable batteries, although they're more expensive, are also great buys because of their excellent shelf life. You'll also help save the environment for not throwing out disposable batteries anymore.

Basic tools and a tool box

Not having even a handy screwdriver, hammer, pliers, or adjustable wrench at home may cost you money. Imagine calling and waiting for a plumber to come and fix a leaking pipe that could have been easily fixed earlier given the right tools. Result: you pay for labor and will have a higher water bill.

Compact fluorescent and LED lights

Sure CFL bulbs cost more than regular light bulbs, but they use up about two-thirds less electricity while producing the same amount of illumination. Also, CFLs are guaranteed to last for 8,000 hours as compared to incandescent bulbs' shorter 500 to 2,000 hours life span.

On the other hand, light-emitting diodes (LEDs) can save energy especially when used for holiday lighting. To illustrate, a typical strand of 50 traditional light bulbs uses 300 watts. With a strand of 50 LED

lights, only 4 watts is used. LEDs are also very durable and don't break easily. And because most energy saving bulbs like CFLs and LEDs generate less heat, they last much longer. LEDs' life span extends up to 100,000 hours.

Items you regularly use that are on sale

Get a return on your money by shopping for the best deals! Anything you normally buy and habitually use that goes on sale is worth purchasing. Just make sure that you really are going to use all of it and that it would not wind up in the trash due to expiration. Non-food items on sale are your best bets although food items can also save you money as long as you are attentive to expiration dates and the items' condition during the sale. Check for damaged packaging and/or color quality especially if buying meats and cold storage food products.

Cuts of meat without or with less bones

Look at the cost per serving rather than the cost per gram. If a cut of meat is cheap, but you throw away a lot of bones and fats, then you're paying more per serving than you might realize.

Spending more money upfront can result to long-term savings. Consider investing in the above items and trim a significant amount of money off your finances.

This article is from MoneySense. Visit www.moneysense.com.ph for more.

Maharlika – Opinyon

EDITORIAL

Most corrupt

For the second year in a row, a controversial annual survey by Hong Kong-based Political and Economic Risk Consultancy has found the Philippines to be the most corrupt in Asia. Sort of.

It is important to keep the limits of the survey in mind. First, it does not include all countries in Asia. It does not include, for instance, some of the most corrupt economies in the region, such as Burma (Myanmar) and North Korea. Thus, it is best to qualify the survey finding in the following terms: The Philippines has the worst corruption rating among Asia's 13 biggest economies.

The survey is also a poll of polls: It is made up of the results of 13 different surveys, one for each economy. Only those expatriate businessmen who do business in the Philippines, for example, were asked for their perception of corruption in the Philippines. There is no region-wide survey, and thus no region-wide finding.

Not least, and as PERC itself notes, corruption is the subject of greater media coverage in the Philippines than in authoritarian countries like China and Vietnam. In other words, and as anti-corruption champion Tony Kwok of Hong Kong has pointed out for years, greater publicity about corruption in government leads naturally to public perception of greater corruption in government.

And yet, despite all these necessary qualifiers, the stark reality confronts us. Seven years after the people-powered ouster of a plundering president, corruption in the country has grown worse.

The civic value of the roiling controversy over the allegedly overpriced national broadband network is that a threshold has been crossed: A people grown complacent over corruption allegations has rediscovered its sense of outrage. Even the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines has recognized that the entire country now faces what it called a "crisis of truth." This crisis is rooted, dramatically, in allegations of spectacular corruption.

We hope that, in recovering its sense of outrage, the public will rediscover—or learn to no longer ignore—the causal connection between corruption and poverty.

Unfortunately, over the years, the public has learned to accept a minimum level of corruption. Even more unfortunately, over the years that minimum level has risen; today we face the possibility that a billion-peso project like the NBN could have been over-priced by as much as half.

The Asian Development Bank's latest diagnostic report cites five "constraints" holding back the country's pro-growth and anti-poverty agenda. To be sure, the report belabors the obvious; we know all this all too well. But the reminders come at the right time. In particular, the report suggests that the country is losing the fight against corruption, thus dampening investor confidence.

To turn the tide in this crucial fight, there is no substitute for putting more crooks in jail.

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Is time on Arroyo's side?

Time is either an enemy or an ally of the embattled government of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. Her elected second government has ruled for four years and three months, and the next presidential election in May 2010 is barely 21 months away.

Although the economy has enjoyed unprecedented growth during the past 30 years, hitting 7.3 percent in 2007, the biggest expansion took place during the past two years, breaking past the 4.6 percent average growth rate in 2001-2006. The downside is that this expansion took place amid the most turbulent period of the Arroyo presidency from 2005 to 2008. That period was marred by at least two attempts to impeach the President in Congress, no less than two military coup attempts (in 2003 during the Oakwood mutiny and only last November at the Peninsula Hotel) and as many people power campaigns to topple the government.

This article does not intend to establish the relationship between economic growth and political turbulence. A recent study by the Asian Development Bank examined the link between corruption and political instability and decline in investment growth. The paper found that governance concerns are one of the "critical constraints to private investment and growth in the Philippines." The purpose of this article is to address the issue of whether or not the "worst" of the political crisis that has plagued the country since the explosion of the so-called "Hello, Garci" tapes purporting to reveal alleged attempts by the President to cheat during the tabulation of the 2004 presidential election is behind us. Basically the question boils down to this: has "political noise" become less of a force in generating political instability and reached its peak?

This argument was foisted by two of the most rabid supporters of the Arroyo regime. It argues that the closer we get to the election, the more likely that the President will ride out the crisis and serve out her term. The implication is that time is on her side.

One of the important supporters of the President,

Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr. has argued that political stability would continue "in the coming months onward to 2009." He believes the military and police will not join any further destabilizing moves. He assumes immutable solidarity of their support for the government.

However, this assumption flies in the face of the record of military mutinies since the 2003 Oakwood rebellion. There is doubt if this façade of unity will not crack against the pressure of worsening corruption scandals.

More sanguine than Esperon is National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales, one of the more sycophantic presidential advisers next to Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez. Not counted among the brightest minds of the Arroyo Cabinet, which is noted for its mediocrity, Gonzales has been quoted as saying, without blushing: "I think we have reached the end, the peak, the peak of scandals, intrigues, everything."

He put the "peak" of the "political noise" on Feb. 29 during the interfaith rally in Makati City, which he claimed failed to muster a crowd large enough to launch a new people power movement. After this year, he said, "nobody will listen to them [the scandals] any more."

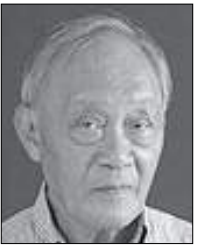
According to this argument, "people are tired of politics of division and despair." The problem with this is that there is more than "political noise" in these scandals. There's some substance behind them. This argument ignores the question, voiced by people outside Malacañang, which Palace insiders do not want to ask or to face: Are people not getting tired of the President? Are they not tired of the proliferation of corruption allegations that multiply rather than diminish as more venalities are uncovered with each day of hearing in Congress on such issues as the National Broadband Network scandal, the sovereignty and "sellout" aspects of the Joint Marine Seismic Undertaking among the Philippines, China and Vietnam?

Exhaustion cuts both ways. The public gets tired of congressional investigations but they get

ANALYSIS

By **AMANDO DORONILA**

Philippine Daily Inquirer



tired, too, of the reproduction of scandals at every congressional investigation. They get tired, too, of being reminded that the economy is performing brilliantly, but they don't get tired asking what groups or which Palace cronies are benefiting from growth, and why the benefits of growth are not filtering down to the poorer classes.

The Filipino people are getting tired of being told they need to keep the President in office until May 2010 to protect the momentum of economic growth and that therefore keeping her in office is indispensable to growth.

The flaw in this argument is that it evades the issue. What price do we have to pay for this growth that's taking place at the expense of "governance concerns," as the ADB report put it? These concerns have been shown to have undermined the growth of foreign investments and GDP.

The argument that people are "tired" of scandals rests on flimsy grounds. On the contrary, there are signs that more people are getting stirred up to go to the streets again; just look at the Feb. 29 rally. Are more and more people not getting tired of President Arroyo rather than of the scandals? How long are they going to tolerate her?

The argument that the worst of the crisis is over is based on wishful thinking. It leads to the delusion that people can endure a few more months of the Arroyo administration as the next election approaches. And the next question is, how long will this delusion hold?

Truth versus Lie

There's something fascinating about the form Good versus Evil has taken in our recent history. Good vs. Evil is of course the quintessential theme or storyline that has tugged at the heart of Juan de la Cruz and pushed him to transcend apathy and inaction and act heroically. That is the theme or storyline of local movies, from action to melodrama, and that is the theme or storyline of the last two exercises of People Power and the impending one.

During Ferdinand Marcos' time, Jose Concepcion caught it pat with the aphorism, "It is better to light a candle than curse the darkness." That line gave a face to the battle between Good and Evil, one between Light and Dark, and it proposed a way to expedite the dawn. Of course his aphorism got battered to death, it turned into a trite platitude. Only a couple of months ago, when this country seemed to have lost its capacity for outrage (I myself feared forever), I was proposing the opposite: Better to curse the darkness than light a candle. You don't curse the darkness, you'll be lighting candles in lieu of getting electricity.

There was no equivalent aphorism during Joseph Estrada's time, but the impeachment trial supplied an unwritten caption to the times, or attached a subliminal label to it: "Bida vs. contrabida." The English, "hero vs. villain," doesn't quite capture it. The bida vs. contrabida brings in its train all the resonances of Estrada's own movies, where he was the flawed but good-hearted bida fighting, physically and morally, with fist and grit, the black-hearted mastermind behind the Max-Alvarado types.

The impeachment trial reversed the roles, with all the visuals you might find in one of his movies. The bidas took the form of the underdog representatives-turned-trial-lawyers, whose glowing ideals showed through their legal rustiness, the chief hero being, yes, Joker Arroyo. And the contrabidas took on the form of the three-piece-suited de campanilla lawyers (the almost stereotypical look of the bad guys in Estrada and Fernando Poe Jr. movies), headed by Andres Narvasa. There was as well the subplot of Chavit Singson

vs. Estrada to drive home the point—bosom buddies turned mortal enemies, such as you find again in the Estrada (and Poe) movies, childhood friends, one turning into a rogue cop and the other into a toughie who champions the neighborhood.

Today, Good vs. Evil has taken the form of Truth vs. Lie.

Again, that has not been expressed in any aphorism, but it is the subtext writ in boldface in all the calls to "tell the truth," "search for the truth," "stand by the truth." The concept had been hovering around for some time, the one hallmark of the current government being its inability to tell the truth—it burned on the tongues of its officials—but until Jun Lozada came along, it never really took off. Lozada proved to be the Tom Cruise to Jack Nicholson spewing the famous line: "The truth? You can't handle the truth!"

The two previous tyrannies were of course also regimes of lies, but Truth vs. Lie did not fit them to a "T" the way it does the current one. The lies in Marcos' time were a little subtler and were to be found in legalese, Marcos being careful to supplement repression with legal cover. The lies during Estrada's time were just as subtle, having to do with myth-making or the tension between illusion and reality that you found between movies and real life. The truly rich epithet for Estrada at the time was "acting president." You did not quite know where the movies ended and real life began.

It's the current regime that lives up completely to the billing of Truth vs. Lie. That is so not just because the official lies are breathtakingly brazen—though that is remarkable enough in itself—but because they are seeping into the public consciousness and encouraging imitation. The most startling instance of it being the cheating in the nursing exams. Until the US authorities ruled to not admit any of the nurses in the batch that took the flawed exams, Filipinos found precious little that was wrong with "fixing" it. Here was clear proof the example of lying and cheating above was being imitated below. Truly, you lead by example. You have crooked leaders, you'll have crooked followers.

THERE'S THE RUB

By **CONRADO DE QUIROS**

Philippine Daily Inquirer



Ironically, it was government itself that launched the Truth vs. Lie theme in a big way—by kidnapping Lozada. I suspect that if Lozada had been allowed to go straight to the Senate to say his piece, notwithstanding that he proposed to tell the truth, he would not have made the impact he did. The NBN deal is not easy to grasp, not even by middle-class viewers. Certainly, it is not so by the masa. But a brazen attempt to liquidate a witness is. Repressing the truth makes it blaze forth in all its glory when it finally comes out. After Lozada survived his ordeal, he could say anything at the Senate, and he would be believed.

Each time I see sights like that bunch of kids serenading Romulo Neri to beseech him to tell the truth, I'm elated. Neri's security men were of course quick to condemn the action, demanding to know why even the kids should be used to push an agenda. But better an agenda that has to do with truth than one that has to do with lies, or with self-imposed silence in the face of perfidy, which is brother to lie. Jesli Lapuz is wrong to imagine that if you prevent Lozada from going to the campuses to campaign for the idea that you too can be a hero by simply telling the truth, you are insulating the kids from politics. If fact, not allowing Lozada to do so is opening up the kids to the horrible lesson, one constantly imparted to them by their leaders, and one that bores into their brains like a hypnotic suggestion wherever they go, that lying pays, cheating pays, crime pays.

Truth vs. Lie: That is the form Good vs. Evil has taken today. And at long last, Truth is winning out.

Maharlika – Samu't Sari



COMMUNITY OUTREACH

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Emmanuel College of the Northern Mariana Islands officers and nursing students take a break for a photo during their first community outreach activity at the XTERRA Saipan Championship in Micro Beach Saturday.



KITE FESTIVAL

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

The Kite Festival's Most Original and Most Beautiful Kite winner, 6-year-old John Robert Tam, poses with his family and friends during the 3rd Annual Marianas Wind Kite Festival and Cultural Food Fair at the American Memorial Park Center Ball Field.



SHIRLEY'S PATRONS

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Customers of Shirley's Coffee Shop in Susupe gather for a photo with its reliable staff.



MIFICPA SEMINAR

Participants listen during a seminar on taxation hosted by the Marianas Institute of Filipino CPAs and Accountants at the Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe.
JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ



BIRTHDAY GUESTS

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

From left, Niña, Joan, and a friend pose for the camera during the birthday celebration of Mark Laurence O. Esguerra, who celebrated his first birthday on March 9, 2008.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

From left, Kuya Jun, Ate Espie and Siony pose for the camera during the birthday celebration of Mark Laurence O. Esguerra at his house in As Lito.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

NEW COUPLE

Greg and Krissana Katsirubas pose with friends after their wedding at the Superior Court last March 2. Friends of the new couple wish them the best as they embark in this new chapter in their lives.



THIRD BIRTHDAY

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Elmer and Theresa Pineda pose with some guests during their daughter Jessica's third birthday celebration at Pizza Hut last March 2.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Jessica Pineda blows the cake's candle during her third birthday celebration at Pizza Hut.

BELATED BIRTHDAY

Happy belated 9th birthday going out to Angel de Jesus. We love you always and may God Bless you. From all your family.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



Youngstyle

BOOK REVIEW

'The Pig Who Saved the World'

By MARYLOU TOUSIGNANT
(C) 2008, THE WASHINGTON POST

"The Pig Who Saved the World"
By Gryllus the Pig
Translated by Paul Shipton
Ages 10 and older



THE WASHINGTON POST

You would think that saving the world once is all that could be asked of any one pig. But no, Gryllus the Pig is back in this sequel to "The Pig Scrolls," and once again the fate of the world rests on his hammy shoulders.

How fortunate it was that when the Greek goddess Circe turned Gryllus into a pig, he retained the ability to talk. Otherwise, we would know nothing about his adventures with the wandering warrior Odysseus, the teen-age poet Homer, the fearsome cyclops Polyphemus (keep your eye on him!), a mysterious grasshopper, the head of Orpheus and the rest of his colorful gang of friends and foes.

Even if you haven't read the first book, you'll be up to speed quickly with the fact that Gryllus saved the cosmos once already—as he reminds readers every page or two. In the sequel he continues his quest to find Circe and have her reverse her curse, turning him back into a man.

But the inhabitants of the Underworld have other plans. They want to destroy the world and have put the gods on Mount Olympus to sleep while they execute their evil scheme.

Gryllus is a reluctant hero—he would much rather be off eating warm pies—but when the world's fate is at stake, what's a pig to do?

It's Greek to me

(c) 2008, The Washington Post

Don't know much about Greek mythology? Let Gryllus help you.

These books are fun ways to introduce yourself to the gods and goddesses, from Aphrodite to Zeus. They include a helpful Who's Who and What's What glossary so you won't confuse the sirens with the lotus eaters, or wander into Tartarus thinking you're in the Elysian Fields.

Va. 5th-graders write, illustrate, publish 'underground' adventures

By MOIRA E. MCLAUGHLIN
(C) 2008, THE WASHINGTON POST

WASHINGTON—It all started with a single sentence: "I'm Danny and I'm a regular boy."

Sean Pickering was in second grade when he wrote that. His mom wanted him to practice writing. Little did either of them think that those seven words would one day become the opening line of a 78-page book, "The Adventures of Danny and Spike Underground."

How did Sean go from one sentence to a published book?

A year ago he enlisted two friends and classmates, Scott Morrill and Dylan Peacock, to help him. The three fourth-graders sat in the back of the bus on their way to Pinebrook Elementary School in Aldie, Va., discussing the book's characters: Danny, Sean, Dylan, Rachel and two talking dogs, Spike and Scotty.

At lunchtime they would talk some more and put their thoughts on paper.

"We just started writing," Sean says. "We'd think about stuff and think about ideas."

Sean was the main writer; Dylan

was the illustrator; and Scott, the boys agreed, was the "idea man." One of Scott's ideas was to name a dog after himself. "I like being a dog," he says.

Sometimes the three would disagree. For example, Sean thought the main character's full name should be Danny Fitzgerald Robinson. Dylan and Scott said that sounded weird. They still haven't resolved the name problem; Danny has no last name in the book.

Classmates asked if they could be characters in the book.

And although the story is based in part on people they know—the boys wouldn't say who—mostly it's a fantasy about kids (and talking dogs) who ride a magic subway and meet good and bad dwarves, mean pythons, goblins, fairies and a Dark Wizard.

Writing and illustrating the book took about a year. The boys' parents and teachers helped edit it.

"I knew I wanted to try to get it published," says Sean. So they pooled their money and came up with \$500 to have five copies printed. Their parents helped pay for more.

The book came out in October and has sold more than 500 copies. One day

AUTHOR TIPS

Sean Pickering offers this advice to young authors:

- Write something different and interesting.
- To get ideas, ask your friends what they would like to read about.
- Rewrite. A story is never perfect. It can always be improved.
- Never give up. Don't let anyone discourage you.

(c) 2008, The Washington Post

Do you have the write stuff?

A Kansas City, Kan., publisher has a contest for young authors who would like to be published. There are three age categories: 6-9, 10-13 and 14-19.

One author from each group will receive \$15,000 for college and a trip to Kansas to have his or her book edited before it is published by the company, Landmark House Ltd.

To be considered, a book must have been written and illustrated by one person. There is an entry fee of \$10, and all entries must be postmarked by June 1.

For contest rules and other information: www.landmarkeditions.com/scripts/contest.asp.

(c) 2008, The Washington Post

in November it was Number 43 on the top-100 list of Barnes and Noble—higher than any Harry Potter book that day!

The boys have had newspaper interviews and book signings. Sean says he gets "kind of nervous talking to strangers."

He better get used to it. The boys are working on a sequel about Danny, Spike and their friends—a longer story that has aliens and a faraway place called Puppy Planet.

Sean thinks the series will end up with 14 books in all—twice as many as Harry Potter.

JACINTO TIMAYÓNG NGIRANGAU TAMAN

affectionately known as "Acin" of "Capt."

Born: January 07, 1954 | Died: March 08, 2008

He now joins his:

- PARENTS:** Guillermo "Aśáramal" Somorang Taman
Rosa Ngirangau Taman
- IN-LAWS:** Simeon S. Saralu
Olympia S. Saralu
- SISTERS:** Ines Taman, Consolacion Taman, Margarita Taman, Rosa Taman, Theresa Taman, Rosario T. Rios, & Ilibera T. Aichi
- BROTHERS:** Jose N. Taman, Alonso N. Taman, Vicente N. Taman & Fernando N. Taman
- BROTHER IN LAW:** Vincent Lee S. Saralu
- NEPHEW:** Vincent N. Taman & Fernando Taman
- NEICE:** Mary Jane T. Rios
- GRAND NEPHEW:** Donnico T. Teregeyo & Angelo R. Aichi

He will be remembered in the hearts of his:

- WIFE:** Maria Dolores "Ling" Saralu Taman
- CHILDREN:** Jim S. Taman/Maryann Manalo; Jermo S. Taman; Dolaina S. Taman; Jazroy S. Taman; Sedona S. Taman; Margarita T. Aguon/Don Aguon
- GRAND CHILDREN:** Skylar Angelique, Mayleen and Tiana T. Aguon
- SISTER:** Thomasa Taman Ada (Herman C. Ada)
- IN-LAWS:** Margarita S. Taman (†Jose), David N. Rios (†Rosario), Dennis Aichi (†Ilibera), Telor Meliong (†Fernando), Vicenta S. and Katarino Rosy(Kevina, Verina, Olyphia, Eulelia & Keoni), and Elizabeth D. S. Saralu.

Numerous Uncles, Aunties, Cousins, Nephews & Nieces, Grand Nieces & Nephews, God Children & Friends.



Rosary is being said at 8pm nightly at his residence in Koblerville.

His remains will be escorted from CHC to his home on Sunday, March 16, 2008 at 4:30pm. Responso will be said at 7pm that evening followed by the midnight rosary. On Monday, March 17, 2008 at 8am, our dad's remains will be escorted to the Mt. Carmel Cathedral. Mass of Christian Burial will be at 0830am, followed by Internment at the Chalan Kanoa Cemetery.

Your thoughts and prayers are greatly appreciated.

Olomwaay from our family

Kids jump into the press pool

By AMY ORNDORFF
(C) 2008, THE WASHINGTON POST

WASHINGTON—Twelve-

year-old Maddie Hartke-Weber elbowed her way to the front of last month's Barack Obama rally at the University of Mary-

land. She wasn't a screaming fan or an autograph-seeker. No, she had a press pass and a couple of questions she wanted to

ask the Democratic presidential candidate for a story that needed to be in her editor's hands by the end of the day.

It's not just adults who are paying close attention to the 2008 presidential campaign. Kids are, too.

Several, including Maddie and five other Washington-area kids, are writing for Scholastic News. The online magazine has more than 80 young reporters around the country covering various topics. One girl in Texas attended last week's victory celebration for John McCain after the Arizona senator locked up the Republican nomination. Other kids are working on their own. They attend rallies and interview people, then post their observations online.

"It's important for kids to know what is going on in politics because (it) will affect the future," said Maddie. What's more, kids "can make changes" right now by influencing how their parents vote.

Sterling, Va.'s Natalie Azzam, 10, and her 13-year-old brother,

Jay, agree that kids should follow politics now because they will be voting someday. When their mom went to vote in the Virginia primary last month, Jay and Natalie accompanied her. Natalie brought along a notebook to doodle in, but instead decided to interview people after they had cast a ballot.

Jay joined her in asking voters which candidate they supported and why. Then they wrote about the experience and shared it with their teachers and classmates.

Natalie thinks it's important for kids to ask questions now so they will be "more knowledgeable about politics when they are older, and maybe they'll have a better chance of winning an election."

That's important to Natalie, who wants to be president (or an actress) when she grows up. Several times a week she visits news sites on the Internet to read about what's going on with the candidates. If she and Jay had their way, kids would have a chance to vote.

"I think kids should take a

test to see if they are mature enough," Jay said.

Chenise Calhoun would ace that test. The Bowie, Md., 10-year-old often reads newspapers to learn more about the election and the candidates. Chenise also attended Obama's Maryland rally, taking photos that she made into a slide show. She posted it on YouTube and did a show-and-tell for her class.

"I thought it was a great idea so (that) everyone would really get an interest in political parties as a child would see it," Chenise said.

Maddie said she became interested in politics partly because she lives in Washington, where politicians are commonplace. In fact, Obama is her neighbor. The Illinois senator lives across the street, but she hasn't seen much of him lately, only the guards who protect him.

At the Maryland rally, she got close enough to shake his hand but not to ask questions. However, she did interview Donna Edwards, who is running for Congress from Maryland.

There is still work ahead for these young journalists. After all, the election is still more than 200 days away.



THE WASHINGTON POST

Maddie Hartke-Weber, 12, right, interviews Andrew Greene, 20, during a political rally at the University of Maryland in February. Maddie is one of many kids reporting on the presidential campaign for Scholastic News.

The road to Inauguration Day

March 4: Arizona Senator John McCain wins four Republican primaries, gaining enough delegates to clinch his party's presidential nomination. On the Democratic side, New York Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton and Illinois Senator Barack Obama continue to fight for delegates.

There are 11 remaining Dem-

ocratic contests with delegates at stake between now and June 3. The Pennsylvania and North Carolina primaries have high delegate counts.

April 22: Pennsylvania primary.

May 6: North Carolina primary.

Aug. 25: Democratic convention opens in Denver, Colo-

rado. (The national convention is where a party's nominees for president and vice president are officially selected.)

Sept. 1: Republican convention opens in Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minnesota.

Nov. 4: Election Day.

Jan. 20, 2009: Inauguration Day. The 44th president of the United States is sworn in.

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20TH DEATH ANNIVERSARY



We, the family of the late

*Maria Kotomar
Taitano - Lieto*

would like to invite all friends and relatives to join us in prayers as we commemorate her 20th year of passing unto eternal life.

Nightly rosary is being offered every 7:30 p.m. at Mr. & Mrs. Martin A./Rosa L. Pua residence in Kagman II beginning Monday, March 17, 2008 until Tuesday, March 25, 2008.

On the final day, March 25, 2008, dinner will be served at the residence of Mr. & Mrs. Martin A. Pua in Kagman II at 7:00 p.m.

Thank you for
your prayers.

THE FAMILY



THE WASHINGTON POST

Members of RATED, a Washington kids' rock-and-roll band, traveled to New York to visit the Naked Brothers Band, featuring Alex and Nat Wolff (center), watch a taping of the Nickelodeon show. The RATED musicians included Rebecca Levy (in green, next to Alex) and, from left next to Nat, Alexander Levy, Edoardo Pisoni and Daniel Guimaraes.

The Naked Brothers' truths

By VALERIE STRAUSS
(C) 2008, THE WASHINGTON POST

WASHINGTON—This was no ordinary field trip. When the kid rock-and-roll band RATED traveled from Washington to New York recently, it wasn't to see the Statue of Liberty.

Instead, keyboardist Alexander Levy, 12; guitarist Edoardo Pisoni, 12; drummer Daniel Guimaraes, 12; and singer Rebecca Levy, 11, visited with the Naked Brothers Band and watched a taping of the Nickelodeon show.

The comedy, in its second season, is about two brothers and their famous rock band. It stars 13-year-old Nat Wolff and 10-year-old Alex Wolff, real-life brothers who do have a rock band.

The show is a family affair. It's written and directed by their mother, actress Polly Draper. Their TV dad is their real dad, musician Michael Wolff, also the show's musical supervisor.

Nat plays keyboard, sings and writes songs; Alex drums.

Members of RATED interviewed the stars to learn how they do what they do. Here are some things that RATED band members, who have been together three years and who jam at Bach to Rock Music School in Bethesda, Md., discovered:

■ Nat can write a song in 15 minutes. Melodies pop into his head, he said, and ideas for lyrics come "from regular life." For example, "Taxi Cab": "When you're walking around and you're late/ The buses are packed/ And the subways you hate/ You need a taxi cab."

■ Both boys are Beatles fanatics. Alex was inspired by drummer Ringo Starr: "I copied all his moves."

■ The show, which often showcases guest stars (including Tony Hawk in the March 23 episode), is taped mostly over the summer so that the kids don't miss too much school. They also are tutored on the set.

■ Alexandra Jean DiMeco, 15, who plays Rosalina, the band's bassist and only girl, can play at least half a dozen other instruments. Allie loves being in the band but said she sometimes wishes there was another girl around.

■ The band's name comes from when the boys were little and emerged from a bath calling themselves "The Naked Brothers Band."

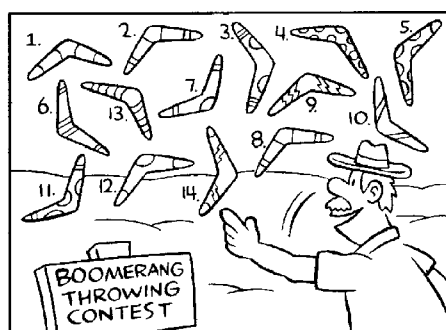
■ Nat started a band when he was 4 or 5 with preschool friends.

■ Nat is shy. Alex calls himself "wild and crazy." Asked if Alex bugs him, Nat joked: "Almost all the time!"

■ Nat likes English class because he loves to read. He recently finished "Of Mice and Men" by John Steinbeck. Nat finds good books "entrancing."

■ Allie loves to read, too. Her favorite book is "Fahrenheit 451" by Ray Bradbury.

■ Alex enjoys reading biographies of people such as Beatle Paul McCartney, but said he prefers another subject: recess.



AN ITEM YOU CAN'T GET RID OF! Can you spot two boomerangs that are exactly alike?

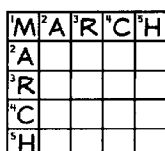
Answer: Two and eight

AN INTERESTING WORD! There is a five-letter word that contains an additional five words within itself, without moving any of the letters around. You have two minutes to find it. This should be easy since I've already told you the answer.

Answer: The word "THERE." The words are: THE, HERE, HER, HE, ERE.

LET'S 'MARCH' OUT OF WINTER WITH THIS PUZZLE! In the word square below, find the four five-letter words that match the following definitions. All words used must read the same, both across and down.

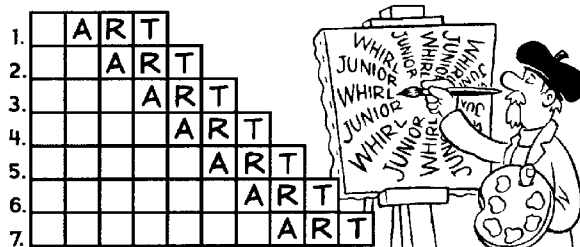
1. Comes in like a lion (MARCH, in place).
2. Hello and goodbye.
3. Something grand, or stately.
4. Monks, not the Monkeys, do it.
5. Stops forward motion.



Answers: 1. March, 2. Aloha, 3. Royal, 4. Chant, 5. Halts.



by Charles Barry Townsend



WORD ART, NOT OP ART!

Can you paint a perfect word picture by correctly identifying the seven words listed? Each contains the word "ART." Add the following hints to your word palette:

1. To move suddenly.
2. Columbus could have used one.
3. To go away from.
4. A self-important newcomer.
5. Used to sell vegetables years ago.
6. One who is needlessly troubled.
7. A term of endearment.

Answers: 1. Dart, 2. Chart, 3. Depart, 4. Upstart, 5. Pushcart, 6. Worrywart, 7. Sweetheart.

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Strange BUT TRUE

By SAMANTHA WEAVER

■ Legislators in Vermont once found it necessary to outlaw whistling while underwater.

■ Historians say that Mary, Queen of Scots was informed of the murder of her husband, Lord Darnley, in 1567 while she was playing golf. She must have been quite a dedicated sportswoman (or an indifferent wife) because they also say that she completed the round.

■ It was poet, philosopher and satirist Horace, who lived in the first century BC, who made the following sage observation: "He who postpones the hour of living is like the rustic who waits for the river to run out before he crosses."

■ As summer approaches, you might want to remember that there are 3,500 known species of mosquitoes. Then again, you might want to forget that fact.

■ Did you know that there is an honest-to-goodness royal palace in the United States? The Iolani Palace in Honolulu was built in 1882 for Hawaiian King David Kalakaua, the islands' second-to-last ruler. It was full of modern amenities—it had electric lighting even before the White House.

■ It seems no one can adequately explain the reason why women tend to strike matches away from themselves while men tend to strike them toward themselves.

■ In the language known as Ewe, spoken by some natives of West Africa, the concepts of "yesterday" and "tomorrow" are expressed by the same word. If you were to translate that word literally into English, you'd come up with "not now."

■ Next time you've got something stuck in your teeth and are trying to remove it, you might want to go with dental floss instead of toothpicks. Medical reports confirm that in the United States, there are roughly 8,000 injuries every year that involve toothpicks.

Thought for the Day: "We spend our time searching for security and hate it when we get it." —John Steinbeck

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MAGIC MAZE • MARTIN —

T T F Q N K I F E C Z W U R P
M J L H S E E C C G Z X U S Q
N L O J C G N A N E C Z X V V
T S R R O E P I N L L J H A E
C A I Y R T K G L W V L N T R
P N D W S R R R L C K B U I G
C R A N E E C O B Z U N A M X
W L U H S L S E H R R E D P O
M L T J E I D G E S G E N E D
R U E D O R B N B A Y H A X W
L U A T T E I R A M A S L A B

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions - forward, backward, up, down and diagonally.

And Lewis Crane Lawrence Scorsese
Balsam Florida Luther King Sheen
Brodeur Georgia Marietta Short
Cline Landau Mull

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GO FIGURE! by Linda Thistle

The idea of Go Figure is to arrive at the figures given at the bottom and right-hand columns of the diagram by following the arithmetic signs in the order they are given (that is, from left to right and top to bottom). Use only the numbers below the diagram to complete its blank squares and use each of the nine numbers only once.

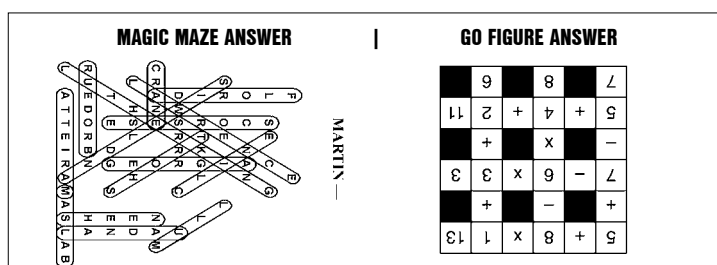
DIFFICULTY: ★

★ Moderate ★★ Difficult
★★★ GO FIGURE!

	+		x		13
+		-		+	
	-		x		3
-		x		+	
	+		+		11
7		8		6	

1 2 3 4 5 5 6 7 8

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Some houseplants are deadly to cats

Q: Last Easter, my cat "Hera" got really ill—vomiting, trembling and extremely lethargic. I rushed her to the emergency veterinary hospital (thank goodness for Angell Memorial) where the vet immediately asked if I had any lily plants in my house. I said yes, because my living room and kitchen were filled with them for the holiday.

The hospital treated Hera and, after a few days with them, she came home with me to recover. The vet says she was extremely lucky, as lily plants are so poisonous to cats that even a 12-hour delay in taking a cat that has ingested the plant to the vet can be fatal.

Please warn your readers who own cats to avoid keeping any type of lily plant in the house. Sign me—Grateful in Boston

A: I'm grateful to you for reminding readers about this danger to cats! As we swing into the spring season, we're inclined to fill the house with new plants. This is fine, but check to make sure those plants aren't a danger to your pets.

The Cat Fancier's Association has



a list of plants dangerous to cats on its Web site. Find it at this address: www.cfainc.org/articles/plants.html.

Cats love to chew on green growing things, and lily leaves are very tempting—as are the leaves of many other houseplants. Lift all houseplants out of your cat's reach, and don't keep plants of the lily family in the home at all. To distract a determined cat, place a tray of fresh catnip within his or her reach as well as a few favorite toys.

Send your tips, questions and comments to Paws Corner, c/o King Features Weekly Service, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475, or e-mail them to pawscorner@hotmail.com.

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A chore chart that gets the jobs done

Most chore charts—the ones where the days of the week run across the top and the chores are listed down one side—don't take into account that family days are unpredictable! What if no one's home for dinner because of a basketball game? Does one child get to skip her turn doing dishes? Or does she have to do it the next night, thereby throwing off the whole chart? See what I mean?

So here's a new plan that really gets the jobs done—unless you have a gremlin in the house. (I'll explain later.)

Discuss with your kids the basic chores that need to be done in your home. Five or six jobs is a good number for starters. You might want to add a category for the most-sought-after privilege. In our house each of the kids ALWAYS wants to sit in the front seat of the car.

For a sturdy chore board, here's what you need:

- 1 piece of white foam board, cut in an 18-inch-wide-by-9-inch-long rectangle
- 6 adhesive-backed plastic hooks
- 6 metal rings (available at office stores)

■ Several plain index cards, cut in 1-inch-by-5-inch strips with a hole punched at the top of each strip (one strip for each child for each chore and privilege).

■ Markers and ruler

Make it in three easy steps:

With a marker, print the chores across the top of the board. Draw vertical lines down the board to separate the categories.

Under each chore, attach a hook.

Let your kids each print their name on their own six strips, then have them



loop their strips on each ring and hang on each hook.

Explain that the person whose name appears on top of the ring is "up" for the task/privilege in the category. When she completes the job, she gets to flip her name over so that the next child's name appears. Now it's his turn!

As for the gremlins? Well, it can happen that a name is mysteriously missing from one loop (washing dishes) and is subsequently found twice in another (gets to choose any dessert). So suddenly someone's saying, "Hey! When's the last time Amelia had sink duty?"

Nothing's perfect. Mostly, though, this chore chart works like a charm. Because not only is the method clear and fair, but the kids are involved in the process.

Donna Erickson's award-winning television series "Donna's Day" airs on public television nationwide. Visit www.donnasday.com to find out when it airs on your local PBS station and to sign up for Donna's e-newsletter.

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Life & Style

Crystal strikes out in new career

TAMPA, Fla. (AP)—Billy Crystal whacked himself in the helmet with his backswing, found his shoelaces and socks sabotaged and watched his team lose. Oh, and the New York Yankees rookie struck out in his one and only at-bat as a big leaguer. “It was the strangest, greatest moment of my life,” he said Thursday.

A day before his 60th birthday, the comedian, actor and Oscar host enjoyed every moment of the day he’d hoped for his entire life.

Talking ball with Yogi Berra and Reggie Jackson at the batting cage. Taking infield with Derek Jeter. Jogging in the outfield with Alex Rodriguez. Becoming a victim of clubhouse pranks. Getting a chance for the kind of hit he can’t find in Hollywood or on Broadway.

“I felt like a baseball player,” Crystal said. “I really hate to leave.”

Wearing No. 60 and cheered on by fellow funnyman Robin Williams, the lifelong Yankees fan was no joke at the plate against Pittsburgh.

Players on both teams perched on the top step of the dugout when Crystal came up. They almost saw something special as he took Jeter’s advice: “Swing early in the count.”

Batting leadoff as the Yankees’ designated hitter in the first inning, he took a late-but-solid cut at a fastball from Pirates lefty Paul Maholm. Crystal hit a



Actor and comedian Billy Crystal swings and misses in his first at bat as designated hitter during the Yankees spring baseball game against the Pittsburgh Pirates at Legends Field in Tampa, Fla., Thursday, March 13, 2008.

chopper that got past first baseman Adam LaRoche, but came down 3 feet foul.

Crystal showed a patient, good eye and got ahead in the count 3-1. Maholm came back with a pair of cutters, and the right-handed Crystal swung over both 88 mph pitches.

“I was mad at myself for swinging at ‘em,” he said.

Especially the last one.

“It was ball four,” said plate umpire Mark Carlson, who shook hands with Crystal before the at-bat.

Said Maholm: “I tried to lay it in there for him. I definitely didn’t try to blow it by him.”

“It was definitely a little nerve-racking,” he said. “I’m glad I didn’t have to watch it every day, him getting a hit off me.”

The fans at Legends Field

gave Crystal a standing ovation, and he raised his hand to acknowledge them. Rodriguez signaled Maholm, who tossed the ball toward the dugout for a souvenir.

Then it was time for a quick trip up to the suite level to talk to Yankees owner George Steinbrenner.

“I was worried he was going to trade me for Jerry Seinfeld,” Crystal said.

Hank Steinbrenner was pleased.

“As long as the fans enjoy it, it’s great. He has a real love for the Yankees. He’s going to help us in the opening of the new stadium and all that,” the general partner said.

Crystal’s debut—and finale—followed the likes of Garth Brooks and Tom Selleck, other celebrities who played in exhibition games.

Johnny Damon took over at DH after the first inning - he was poised to pinch run had Crystal gotten on base. When the game ended, a 5-3 Pirates win, Crystal said his career as a major leaguer was over.

“I can always say I led off for the New York Yankees. That’s an amazing feeling,” he said. “I don’t even know how to describe it. It was so intensely good.”

Surely better than getting a World Series ring as part-owner of the Arizona Diamondbacks when they beat his beloved Yankees in 2001.

Birthday celebration reveals marriage headed for trouble

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE



Dear Abby

DEAR ABBY: I recently turned 40, and because I don’t get along with my husband “Ted’s” family, I chose to celebrate out of town with my parents and siblings. At the end of my five-day trip, Ted picked me up at the airport and barely greeted me. He waited three days to give me my birthday gift.

When he finally handed me the box, Ted didn’t even wait for me to open it. He went off to take a shower. I waited for him to finish, then opened the gift in front of him. Inside was a pair of diamond earrings.

I have never wanted diamond earrings, and I have told him so many times. I had asked Ted for cash so I could buy a new sewing machine. Why diamond earrings?

That night we had a major quarrel, and now I’ll never be able to enjoy them. What do I do with them now?

—TICKED OFF IN RHODE ISLAND

DEAR TICKED OFF: First, you apologize for being ungracious about the gift your husband gave you for your birthday. Then sit down and try to analyze why you and his family don’t get along and why your marriage is in serious trouble—because it is.

After that, ask your doctor to refer you to a licensed marriage counselor and try to bridge the communication gap that has developed between you and your spouse. At this point, what to do with the diamond earrings is the least of your worries.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I’m a 17-year-old high school senior. I got my driver’s license around the same time as all my friends—with the exception of my best friend, “Robin.” Robin lives about 20 miles from my house, and anywhere I go she’s always asking for rides. The problem is that I pay for my own gas and car insurance, and I only have a part-time job, along with babysitting.

Robin’s mom told me she planned on giving me some gas money, but she only gave me \$5. How can I keep from alienating my friend when I tell her I can’t afford to keep going out of my way to get her unless she contributes more?

—BROKE IN NEW YORK

DEAR BROKE: A picture is worth a thousand words. Because you feel Robin may be too sensitive to be told in plain English, prepare a chart for her illustrating the distance from your house to hers and back, the mileage you get per gallon and the ever-increasing cost of gas. Illustrating the problem may help your friend see that what you’re telling her isn’t a personal rejection but a reality.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I have an etiquette question. If you aren’t supposed to wear white after Labor Day, when can you begin wearing white again?

—DEBBIE IN JONESBORO, ARK.

DEAR DEBBIE: You can wear white whenever the spirit moves you. According to “Emily Post’s Etiquette,” 17th Edition: “The old rule about wearing white only between Memorial Day and Labor Day is a thing of the past. Today the question of wearing white applies to the WEIGHT of the fabrics, not COLOR. (Italics are mine.)

“Lightweight fabrics in white and pastels are worn in the warm/hot months and heavier fabrics known as ‘winter whites’ are worn in the cool and cold months. Since the country includes varied climate zones, the times for switching between summer and winter whites will depend on the weather where you are.”

■ ■ ■

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Jackson lawyer: Neverland auction off

LOS OLIVOS, Calif. (AP)—Michael Jackson still has Neverland, having cut an 11th-hour deal Thursday to keep it off the auction block. But the magic that once made the financially troubled entertainer’s 2,500-acre paradise in the rolling hills of central California’s wine country one of the most talked-about places on Earth seems to have vanished along with its reclusive owner.

Jackson hasn’t been seen in this bucolic area of oak-studded hills since he was acquitted in June 2005 of molesting a 13-year-old visitor to his estate, and his absence leaves the future of Neverland, a sort of Hearst Castle for 12-year-olds, in doubt.

“We’re all, of course, wondering what’s going to happen. We’ve heard rumors but we don’t know anything,” said Kim Morrison, one of the administrators of a private school located just across the road from Neverland.

One of those rumors has soccer star David Beckham interested in the property.

“I wouldn’t mind having a new neighbor. It would be nice to have Beckham there,” laughed Morrison, although she quickly added that Jackson “was

always a good neighbor.”

The pop star’s attorney, L. Londell McMillan, told The Associated Press his client has worked out a confidential agreement with Fortress Investment Group LLC allowing him to retain ownership of the estate.

Whether he’ll keep it for long, however, remains to be seen. Jackson is said to be living in various places, including overseas, and his family has said that when dozens of sheriff’s deputies raided the place in 2003 they destroyed the fond feelings he once had for Neverland.

Before Thursday’s deal was announced, the property was scheduled to be auctioned March 19 because Jackson had gone into default. Financial Title Co. of San Francisco said he owed \$24.5 million on the former cattle ranch he bought from real estate baron William Bone in 1988.

Jackson, then just 29, was at the height of his career when he purchased Neverland, naming it after the mythical land of Peter Pan—where boys never grow up. He had become a pop superstar before his 12th birthday, and he has said he created Neverland in an effort to obtain the childhood he never had.

Soon he had installed a merry-go-round, bumper cars, a Ferris wheel, roller coaster, a game arcade and a private train to rival that of Disneyland’s. He brought in a zoo that included flamingos, giraffes, elephants, orangutans and reptiles and brought in a veterinarian and snake handler to care for them.

“It’s like stepping into Oz,” he once said. “Once you come in the gates, the outside world does not exist.”

These days all is quiet at Neverland except for the squawking of a few of exotic birds that continue to roost in the trees. The other animals are gone and the only outward thing to distinguish Jackson’s home from any other is the guard shack with its satellite dish just inside the locked front gate.

“Nobody is living here,” says a friendly but otherwise reticent guard who has been ordered not to talk to anyone.

The shuttered amusement park sits out of sight, but recent aerial photos show it beginning to fall into disrepair.

It’s a far cry from Jackson’s heyday in the 1980s and ‘90s, when hundreds of children might be playing there.

“People would line up for a

quarter mile or more just to get in the gate,” recalled longtime resident Carol McCarley, out for a morning walk past the ranch.

Although he was rarely seen around town, many say Jackson always gave off the impression of a friendly neighbor.

When a rattlesnake would get into a classroom at The Family School, Morrison said, a call to Neverland would bring the snake handler over to dispose of it. If a child got hurt on the playground, the ranch doctor and Neverland’s own fire department would arrive sooner than the local paramedics.

Jackson, meanwhile, would invite children by the thousands to enjoy the ranch.

Many were disadvantaged or seriously ill. Some were simply local school kids lucky enough to be granted a field trip to Neverland.

“My son knew Michael’s nephews and would hang out at the ranch a lot. It was a wonderland for kids,” said Skip Biolley, taking a break from putting a fresh coat of paint on J. Woeste’s knickknack shop in the heart of downtown Los Olivos, an area that stretches all of two blocks in one direction and two in another.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson



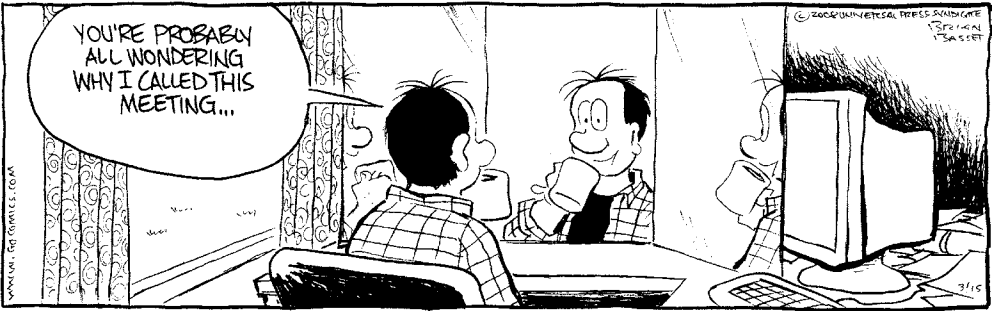
Garfield®

By Jim Davis



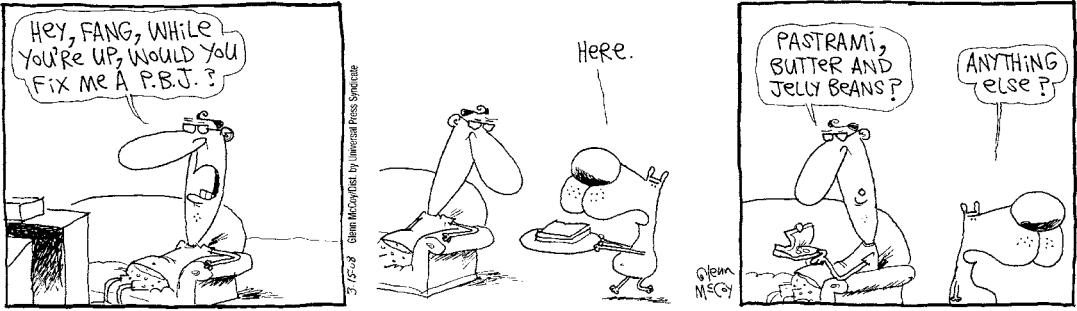
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset



The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Collec-
tions

5 Walk of
Fame
decora-
tion

9 Poorly
lit

12 New
Zealander

13 "Be
quiet!"

14 Eggs, to a
zoologist

15 Saharan

16 Grooving
on

17 H
look-alike

18 Be
inclined

19 Ruin the
surface

20 Symbol of
grace

21 That guy

23 Parisian
pal

25 Wages

28 Firetruck
necessity

32 Phant-
om's
bailiwick

33 Pale
yellow

34 "I'll get
you, my —!"

36 Political
relocator

37 Haw
preceder

38 Trojans'
sch.

39 One of
the Three
Bears

42 Trail the
pack

44 Part of
the foot?

48 Historic
period

49 Lotion
additive

50 Pearl
Harbor
locale

51 \$
dispenser

52 Teller's
partner

53 Fairy-tale
preposi-
tion

54 Prepare
Easter
eggs

55 Genea-
logy
chart

56 Denomi-
nation

DOWN

1 Old card
game

2 Green
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3 Doppel-
gänger

4 Hesse
novel

5 Vibrate
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mally

6 Albacore

7 Related
to

8 Pi
follower

9 Actor
Carey

10 Tittle

11 Orner

20 Bandmate
of Johnny
Rotten

22 Angry

24 Injures
severely

25 Bribe

26 Spring-
time
abbr.

27 Shelter

29 Mutt

30 Blunder

31 "Catcher
in the
—"

35 Hardly
the
silent
type

36 Oregon
city

39 Honey
drink

40 Bohemian

41 Jerry
Herman
musical

43 Top-rated

45 Scruff

46 Ice-cream
parlor
menu
abbr.

47 Quest

49 Suitable

Solution time: 27 mins.

Yesterday's answer 3-15

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Caitlin Wachs, 19; Sean Biggerstaff, 25; Mark Hoppus, 36; Sly Stone, 65

Happy Birthday: What a great year to spruce things up: your home, your life, your looks. The results you get will be spectacular as long as you follow through. Hard work will pay off and recognition for your labor will be granted. It's a new you and a new year, so push hard and make the most of it. Your numbers are 6, 8, 19, 28, 36, 42

ARIES (March 21-April 19): It won't be difficult for you to get into trouble today. Keep your thoughts to yourself and avoid any sort of discussion with anyone who may be critical. Whatever you do, stick to your set budget. **

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): It's what you put out that will determine what you get back. Follow through with your ideas and plans and you will succeed. A love interest looks promising but don't get involved if either one of you is already in another relationship. ****

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Work-related friends are likely to be charming but not trustworthy. You may be given false information and are better off finding out for yourself what actually is required of you. Emotional outbursts over money, contracts or any legal matters will not benefit you. **

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Rest and relaxation should be your plan. It's time to enjoy your family and friends. Don't be tempted to overspend in order to show your appreciation and love for someone. You are bet-

ter off being kind and generous. ***

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Don't make a costly mistake. A sudden change in your financial situation is apparent but, if you spend it as fast as you make it, you won't get ahead. Do your best to pay off and collect old debts. You'll feel so much better. ***

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): You will have plenty of choices but, if you decide to use your energy taking care of responsibilities that don't belong to you, you will miss out on something beneficial. Make alterations at home and put yourself first for a change. ****

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Don't let anyone push you around. Keeping the peace doesn't mean you should let someone take advantage of you. Avoid situations that are potentially disruptive and ignore anyone using emotional blackmail. **

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Put time aside for a little old-fashioned loving. Do things with the people you care about and you will feel the rewards of being loved. A short trip will change your outlook as well as your relationship with someone special. *****

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Don't count on anything before it's a reality. Reassure the people you are dealing with that you know what you are doing and that you have a foolproof plan in place. Stick to basics. ***

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Start counting your cash and preparing to put it into something serviceable. Profits can be

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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made through property investments, a new business idea or a grant being offered. Utilize your time and your money so that it works for you. ***

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Don't feel obligated to pay for others. You can make suggestions but only if you are willing to delegate what needs to be done. Don't let anyone push you, especially if he or she is trying to get out of doing things. ***

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Reevaluate your personal situation. Take a close look at your living environment and consider making a move or changes that will help you feel more comfortable. Such changes could improve your state of mind and your ability to be successful in the future. *****

Birthday Baby: You are compassionate, understanding and loyal. You are possessive, a collector and an advocate of tradition. You are creative, accomplished and a dreamer.

Eugenia's Web sites: astroadvice.com for fun, eugenialast.com for confidential consultations

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku By Dave Green

6	3		8	9				5
								1
				2				
			9		5			3
4		9				5		7
8			7		4			
				8				
2								
9				5	6		4	8

Difficulty Level ★★★★★ 3/15

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

1	8	2	9	4	7	6	3	5
7	6	3	2	1	5	8	9	4
4	5	9	3	6	8	1	2	7
5	2	6	7	8	1	3	4	9
8	9	1	4	3	2	7	5	6
3	7	4	5	9	6	2	8	1
2	3	7	6	5	4	9	1	8
6	1	5	8	2	9	4	7	3
9	4	8	1	7	3	5	6	2

Difficulty Level ★★★★★ 1/14

WONDERWORD® By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD. The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

SOUL TALK Solution: 9 letters

H Y S L B T S R E T S I S L R
D E I V O I C E E G A S S E M
P N A A N S W E R S E S V N S
K R I R D E E P N R D O S N S
K U L M T I F S P N L T O A R
N O I S N A P X E U O I E H E
O J F Y I E E I T R T C A C H
W F E T C T R I I S A P N H T
L E H I I F O E E R P I E T O
E E A N V N S U B Y H S J U R
D L G U A I Q M R T N O S R B
G I E R A C E I I E Y T E T I
E N Y U F L O W S F E I L E B
Y G R E N E A G U I D E F L L
E S A E L E R L N O I T O M E

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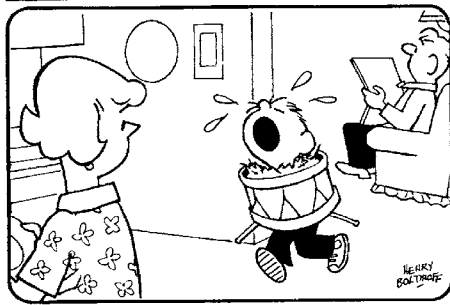
Answers, Beliefs, Bible, Bond, Brothers, Care, Channel, Connect, Deep, Embrace, Emotion, Energy, Expansion, Express, Faith, Feelings, Flow, Friends, Guide, Happy, Heart, Ignite, Journey, Joyful, Knowledge, Life, Link, Message, Mind, Questions, Release, Revolutionary, Self, Sense, Sisters, Special, Stories, Truth, Unity, View, Voice, Within

Yesterday's Answer: Balance

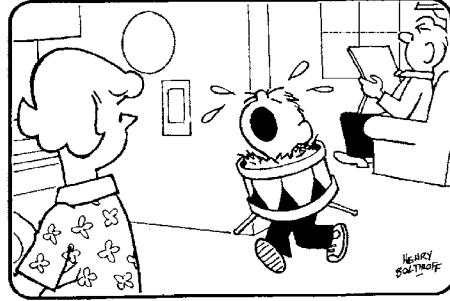
We intend to your request: TREASURY #6 is the first-ever Wonderword book containing only 20 x 20 puzzles, with 75 of those large puzzles. To order, send check or money order for \$16.95 each plus \$3.25 p&h (\$14.20 total each, U.S. funds only) for the first volume, \$1.50 p&h for each additional volume, to Wonderword, Universal Press Syndicate, 4500 Main St., Kansas City, Mo. 64111 or call toll-free 1-800-255-6734, ext. 6888. Order online at wonderword.com.

STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call 1-800-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

HOCUS-FOCUS BY HENRY BOLTIHOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Window has been added. 2. Drum design is different. 3. Chair ruffle is missing. 4. Picture has been moved. 5. Mom's earring is missing. 6. Mom's hand is not seen.

Wishing Well®

5	7	5	6	3	2	3	7	5	4	8	5	3
1	P	N	C	B	A	E	O	I	A	U	T	D
5	8	7	6	7	5	8	5	7	8	7	6	2
1	N	P	L	U	A	I	T	L	O	A	O	C
5	3	4	5	2	3	5	6	7	2	7	2	3
1	I	M	V	T	P	E	U	R	B	I	O	L
4	3	5	7	6	5	4	8	5	6	8	3	4
E	O	T	T	D	A	S	N	K	S	O	M	S
8	7	6	8	2	6	7	4	7	2	8	5	6
F	Y	A	M	L	R	I	C	N	D	I	E	E
8	2	4	7	5	6	4	7	2	7	8	4	3
N	L	L	C	N	G	E	R	Y	E	D	A	A
4	7	3	4	7	6	7	3	6	3	7	8	6
R	A	T	S	S	O	E	I	N	C	S	S	E

HERE IS A PLEASANT LITTLE GAME that will give you a message every day. It's a numerical puzzle designed to spell out your fortune. Count the letters in your first name. If the number of letters is 6 or more, subtract 4. If the number is less than 6, add 3. The result is your key number. Start at the upper left-hand corner and check one of your key numbers, left to right. Then read the message the letters under the checked figures give you.

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Super Crossword THEIR SONGS

- ACROSS
- 1 Clerical garments
 - 5 Rhine whine?
 - 8 Put on a happy face
 - 12 Like Mozart's flute
 - 17 86 Across, e.g.
 - 18 Actress Joanne
 - 19 See 19 Down
 - 21 Hersey setting
 - 22 Elvis' canine?
 - 24 Verdi opera
 - 25 Like Kansas?
 - 26 Big beginning
 - 27 Quire part
 - 29 Cadet sch.
 - 31 Fuego
 - 32 Felons, for instance
 - 34 Like Peter or Catherine
 - 37 Oxford omega
 - 38 Archaic preposition
 - 39 General's gerund
 - 41 Vitamin bottle abbr.
 - 42 Finn's creator
 - 44 Meyers of "Kate & Allie"
 - 45 Plastic Band
 - 46 Choose, with "or"
 - 48 Syrup source
 - 51 Freda Payne's jewelry?
 - 56 Change for the better
 - 59 Roofer's need
 - 60 Los —, CA
 - 61 Islamic holy book
 - 63 "Mila 18" author
 - 65 "The Crying Game" star
 - 66 Isinglass
 - 69 Fiat hat
 - 70 Tiny parasite
 - 71 Cask
 - 72 Lingerie purchase
 - 75 The Cyrkle's plaything?
 - 78 Accounting abbr.
 - 79 Computer acronym
 - 80 They may be bright
 - 81 Blunder
 - 82 Barbecue
 - 84 Blow away
 - 85 Push a product
 - 86 "Manon" melodies
 - 88 Confederate
 - 92 Goldfish, e.g.
 - 94 Profundity
 - 96 Jimmy Gilmer's house?
 - 99 Early computer
 - 101 Scuffle
 - 102 TV-listing abbr.
 - 103 Fragrant neckwear
 - 104 Material
 - 107 Fairy queen
 - 109 Made milder
 - 112 Farrow of "Alice"
 - 114 Arthur or Benadict
 - 115 Proclamation
 - 117 American poet Charles
 - 118 Caravansary
 - 119 Blocks the way
 - 121 Angler's basket
 - 123 Fido's dinner, perhaps
 - 125 Katmandu's country
 - 127 Stop working
 - 130 Jan & Dean's resort?
 - 133 Speak one's mind
 - 134 Semitic tongue
 - 135 Child welfare org.
 - 136 Baseball's Cabell
 - 137 That's no bull!
 - 138 "Bon voyage" site
 - 139 Evergreen tree
 - 140 Cry of distress
 - DOWN
 - 1 Wednesday
 - 2 Weaver's need
 - 3 Plan
 - 4 Burned a bit
 - 5 Count up
 - 6 Tennyson's "the Bar"
 - 7 Laurie of "Jeeves and Wooster"
 - 8 Trade
 - 9 East ender?
 - 10 Coach
 - 11 Computer selection list
 - 12 Paving material
 - 13 Hullahaloo
 - 14 Rick Nelson's social event?
 - 15 Private
 - 16 "The Friends of Eddie —" (73 film)
 - 19 With 19 Across, popular polka
 - 20 Wagner's father-in-law
 - 23 Challenge
 - 28 Tomorrow's
 - 30 Litter sound
 - 33 Classy doc?
 - 35 Decorate
 - 36 Sticky stuff
 - 39 Evangelist
 - 40 Recess
 - 43 Hoim or Hunter
 - 44 Attorneys' org.
 - 47 Up or down item?
 - 49 Mil. rank
 - 50 Largest antelope
 - 52 Comic DeLuise
 - 53 Spouse of Isis
 - 54 Yoga position
 - 55 Uninteresting
 - 57 Zones
 - 58 Perennial bestseller
 - 62 Waves of grain color
 - 64 Dieter's dishes
 - 67 Handed over
 - 68 Mr. Rochester's ward
 - 70 Chilean pianist
 - 72 Pair
 - 73 Atkinson of "The Black Adder"
 - 74 Don McLean's dessert?
 - 76 Fiennes of "Quiz Show"
 - 77 Olympic troublemaker
 - 83 Super Bowl sound
 - 86 Winning
 - 87 Some NCOs
 - 89 "The Sheik" star
 - 90 Laid on buttercream
 - 91 Aspen item
 - 93 Crony
 - 95 Heavy reading?
 - 97 Utter
 - 98 Julia of "The Addams Family"
 - 100 Bakery buy
 - 105 It's in the bag
 - 106 Stern
 - 108 Squabble
 - 109 Relished a roast
 - 110 From
 - 111 "Dead End Kid" Leo
 - 112 Underworld judge
 - 113 Like a lummo
 - 116 Hands
 - 120 — aerobics
 - 122 Catch sight of
 - 124 Fill the hold
 - 126 Chemical suffix
 - 128 McGwire stat
 - 129 Indignation
 - 131 Unrefined
 - 132 Fashion monogram

Trivia test by Fifi Rodriguez

1. GEOGRAPHY: What was the ancient name for Japan's capital Tokyo?
2. ANATOMY: How many chromosomes do human beings have?
3. TELEVISION: What popular 1970s U.S. sitcom was based on an earlier TV series in the United Kingdom called "Till Death Us Do Part"?
4. LITERATURE: What is the name of the family in John Steinbeck's "The Grapes of Wrath"?
5. SCIENCE: A scientist who studies animals is known as what?
6. MOVIES: Who played the dead friend in "The Big Chill," although none of his scenes appeared in the final movie?
7. INVENTIONS: Who invented the cowboy hat?
8. ENTERTAINERS: What is the birth name of singer Diana Ross?
9. COMICS: What is the name of the news correspondent in "Doonesbury"?
10. U.S. PRESIDENT: Who was the only president to be married in a White House ceremony?

10. Grover Cleveland
9. Roland Hedley
8. Diane Emms-Earle Ross
the "Stetson."
7. Hatmaker John Hathorn Stetson sold his first hat in 1865. It was later called
6. Kevin Costner
5. A zoologist
4. The Joads
3. "All in the Family"
2. 46 (23 pairs)
1. Edo

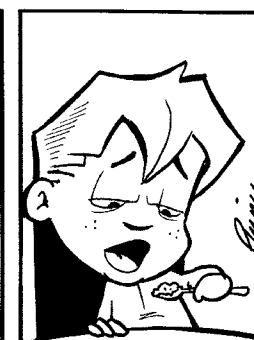
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Saturday's Answers

ACROSS	DOWN
1. 100	1. 100
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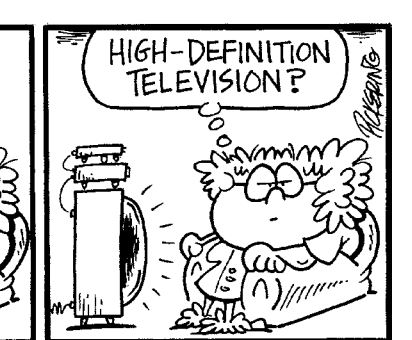
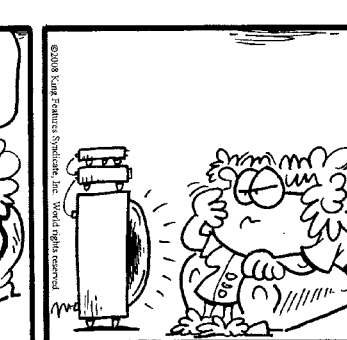
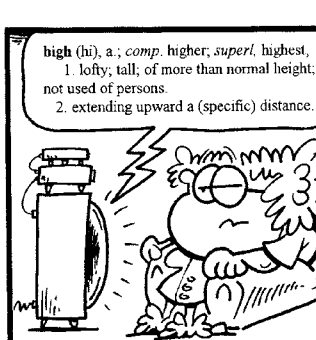
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Amber Waves

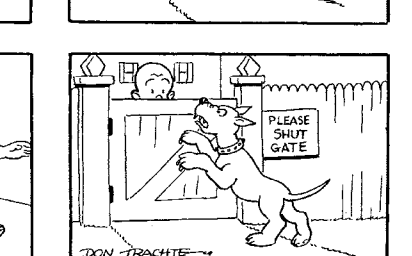
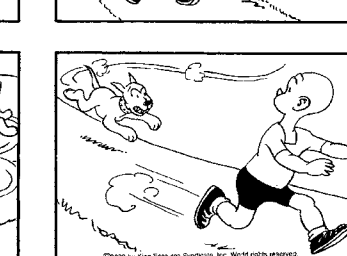
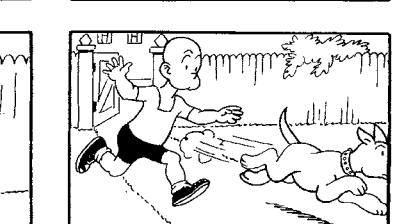
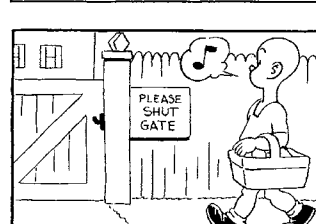
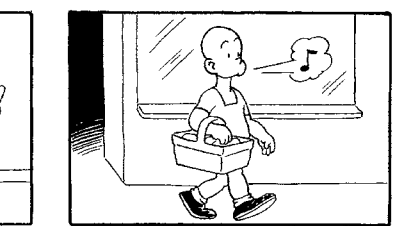
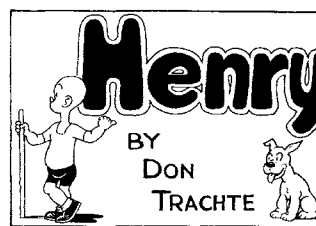
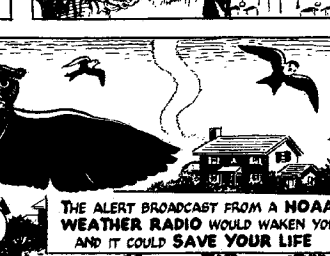
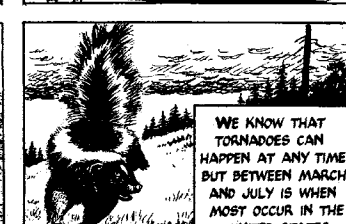
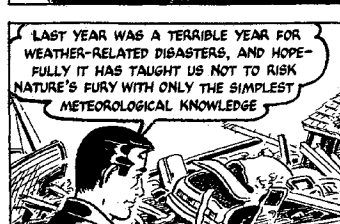
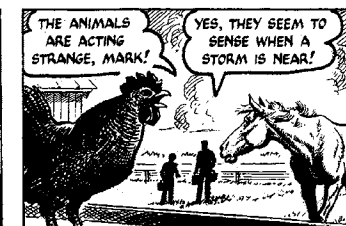


by Dave T. Phipps

The Spats



by Jeff Pickering



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Xango distributors welcome to bring guests.

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1 brm, T/B, 24-hr water \$210/month,
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JOB OPPORTUNITIES

1 MASSEUR/MASSEUSE (THS 0018)
Salary:\$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self provided; workmen's compensation provided & transportation self arrange. Contact: Editha G. Welle dba Cristelle's Beauty Parlor @235-4536.

2 BEAUTICIAN (THS 0019)
Salary:\$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self provided; workmen's compensation provided & transportation self arrange. Contact: Editha G. Welle dba Cristelle's Beauty Parlor @235-4536.

1 CONSTRUCTION WORKER (THS 0020)
Salary:\$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self housing; self food; medical & workmen compensation. Contact: Unicorn Corporation @322-3364.

1 AUTO MECHANIC (THS 0021)
Salary:\$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self arranged food; medical & workmen's compensation provided. Contact: Joseph J.A. Pablo dba 3G's Services @233-7069.

1 DRESSMAKER (THS 0022)
Salary:\$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; food not provided; medical & workmen's compensation provided. Contact: JAP Professional Corp. dba Lenchies Fashion @285-9500.

1 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT (THS 0023)
Salary:\$3.05/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; food not provided; medical & workmen's compensation provided. Contact: Rolando Lagartos dba R&R Auto Repair Shop @285-9500.

1 IRONER (THS 0024)
Salary:\$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self arranged food; self arranged transportation to and from job; workmen's compensation & medical expenses. Contact: Shao Hongxia Jones dba Beauty Boutique & Dress Shop @287-8206.

1 A/C TECHNICIAN (THS 0025)
Salary:\$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arrangement housing; self arrangement food; workmen's compensation & medical provided by employer. Contact: Gonzalo V. Pangelinan Jr. dba Pacific Airconditioning @234-9267.

1 SALES REPRESENTATIVE (THS 0026)
Salary:\$3.55/hour. Benefits: Workers compensation & medical expenses company provided. Contact: Kumanomi Island Co., Ltd. @233-6298.

1 WAITRESS/WAITER (THS 0027)
Salary:\$3.55/hour. Benefits: Workers compensation & medical expenses company provided. Contact: Kumanomi Island Co., Ltd. @233-6298.

1 GENERAL MANAGER (THS 0028)
Salary:\$2,000.00/monthly. Benefits: Workers compensation & medical expenses company provided. Contact: Treasures Inc. @233-3701.

1 ACCOUNTANT (THS 0029)
Salary:\$4.05-\$7.75/hour. Benefits: \$10.00-\$50.00/gas allowance; workers compensation & medical insurance company provided. Contact: H.I.S. Saipan Inc. @234-7053.

1 SCUBA DIVING INSTRUCTOR (THS 0030)
Salary:\$3.05-\$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medical expense & workers compensation employer provided. Contact: Wondersea Saipan Inc. @233-7011.

1 MANAGER, COMPUTER & INFORMATION SYSTEM (SM 0025)
Salary:\$1,972.00-\$2,700.00/monthly. Benefits: Medical as provided by law & workmen's compensation. Contact: L&T Group of Companies Ltd. @236-2400/2457.

1 ACCOUNTANT (SM 0026)
Salary:\$3.55-\$5.50/hour. Benefits: Medical as provided by law & workmen's compensation. Contact: L&T Group of Companies Ltd. @236-2400/2457.

1 HOUSEWORKER (SM 0027)
Salary:\$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self arranged food; workers compensation & medical. Contact: Zheng Biao @483-1188.

2 ARCADE ATTENDANT (SM 0028)
Salary:\$3.55-\$4.00/hour. Benefits: Workers compensation insurance & medical reimbursable. Contact: Jimin Enterprises, Inc. dba Grand Poker/Royal Casino @233-3378.

1 BAKER (SM 0029)
Salary:\$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medical & workers compensation. Contact: Winchell's Inc. dba Winchell's Donut House @235-0247.

1 COUNTER ATTENDANT (SM 0030)
Salary:\$6.20/hour. Benefits: Medical & workers compensation. Contact: Winchell's Inc. dba Winchell's Donut House @234-5566.

1 COMPUTER PROGRAMMER (SM 0031)
Salary:\$6.20/hour. Benefits: Self provided housing; self provided food; medical expense & worker compensation. Contact: Yaong Corporation @235-8727.

1 SALES SUPERVISOR (SM 0032)
Salary:\$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self provided housing; self provided food; medical expense & worker compensation. Contact: Yaong Corporation @235-8727.

1 FOUNTAIN SERVER (SM 0033)
Salary:\$3.55-\$4.00/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; employee provided food; medical & workmen's compensation as provided by employer. Contact: John Hirsh dba Big Dipper Ice Cream Factory @233-9352.

1 AUTO MECHANIC (SM 0034)
Salary:\$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arrange housing; self arrange food; medical & workers compensation. Contact: Mantrade Company Inc. @235-0695/898-5713.

1 PLUMBER (SM 0035)
Salary:\$3.55-\$5.60/hour. Benefits: Free housing; self provide food; medical & workmen's compensation. Contact: Vestcor Real Estate, Ltd. @322-3797.

1 MAINTENANCE BLDG. REPAIRER (SM 0036)
Salary:\$3.55-\$4.70/hour. Benefits: Free housing; self provide food; medical & workmen's compensation. Contact: Vestcor Real Estate, Ltd. @322-3797.

1 ELECTRICAL ENGINEER (SM 0037)
Salary:\$800.00-\$1,995.00/monthly. Benefits: Free housing; self provide food; medical & workmen's compensation. Contact: Vestcor Real Estate, Ltd. @322-3797.

1 MASON (SM 0038)
Salary:\$3.55-\$4.05/hour. Benefits: Medical & workman compensation provided. Contact: Guangdong Dev. Co., Ltd. @288-2288.

1 SALES MANAGER (SM 0039)
Salary:\$3.50-\$4.75/hour. Benefits: Medical & workman compensation provided. Contact: Guangdong Dev. Co., Ltd. @288-2288.

2 COOK (THS 0031)
Salary:\$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medical & workman compensation. Contact: Bobbie's Café @235-2624.

1 KITCHEN HELPER (THS 0032)
Salary:\$3.55/hour. Benefits: Employee self arranged housing;

WHATZIT Solution:
Bull in a china shop

employer provided food; the employee is provided with workmen's compensation insurance & medical expenses are reimbursable. Contact: Yolanda O. Alfante dba Kulit's Enterprises @234-2412 or 235-1105.

1 COOK (THS 0033)
Salary:\$3.55/hour. Benefits: Employee self arranged housing; employer provided food; the employee is provided with workmen's compensation insurance & medical expenses are reimbursable. Contact: Yolanda O. Alfante dba Kulit's Enterprises @234-2412 or 235-1105.

1 COMMERCIAL CLEANER (THS 0034)
Salary:\$3.05/hour. Benefits: Workers compensation & medical. Contact: Universal Developers @322-5881.

1 HOUSEWORKER (THS 0035)
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1 GEN. MANAGER (THS 0036)
Salary:\$1,000.00-\$3,000.00/monthly. Benefits: Self arrange housing; self provided food & workmen's compensation. Contact: Nippon Travel Agency dba Nippon Travel Agency @233-3719.

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Job Vacancy Announcements

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Job Vacancy Announcements

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

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All advertising in the Saipan Tribune are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, Saipan Tribune reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

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1 WELDER (THS 0041)

Salary:\$5.00-\$7.00/hour. Benefits:

\$175.00/monthly housing benefit; self provided food; medical insurance & workers compensation coverage. Contact: Fleet Marine, LLC dba Fleet Marine Trading @233-0744.

1 PHARMACIST (THS 0042)

Salary:\$5.76-\$6.05/hour. Benefits: Free of charge housing; self provide food; w/transportation service; workmen compensation & medical expense. Contact: Saipan Employment Agency Svcs Inc. @234-7327.

1 BLDG. MAINTENANCE (THS 0043)

Salary:\$3.55/hour. Benefits: ER provided housing; self provide food; workmen compensation & medical expense. Contact: Saipan Employment Agency Svcs Inc. @234-7327.

1 CASHIER (SUPERVISOR) (THS 0044)

Salary:\$3.55-\$5.75/hour. Benefits: \$30.00/monthly deduction housing; medical coverage expense; vacation leave (earned after 1 yr.

of service); sick leave (earned after 180 days of service); compassionate leave; employees discount & workers compensation. Contact: Asia Pacific Hotels, Inc. dba Saipan Grand Hotel @234-6601.

1 BARTENDER (SUPERVISOR) (THS 0045)

Salary:\$3.55-\$5.75/hour. Benefits: \$30.00/monthly deduction housing; medical coverage expense; vacation leave (earned after 1 yr. of service); sick leave (earned after 90 days of service); compassionate leave; employees discount & workers compensation. Contact: Asia Pacific Hotels, Inc. dba Saipan Grand Hotel @234-6601.

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Salary:\$3.55-\$4.00/hour. Benefits: Self arrange housing; medical coverage expense; vacation leave (earned after 1 yr. of service); sick leave (earned after 90 days of service); compassionate leave; employees discount & workers compensation. Contact: Asia Pacific Hotels, Inc. dba Saipan Grand Hotel @234-6601.

1 AUTO MECHANIC (SM 0040)

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1 ACCOUNTANT (SM 0041)

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1 COMMERCIAL CLEANER (SM 0042)

Salary:\$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self provided housing; self provided food; medical & workmen compensation. Contact: Mark D. Pangelinan dba ABM Auto Body Repair Shop @285-3212.

1 PROGRAMMER (SM 0043)

Salary:\$650.00-\$700.00/monthly. Benefits: Self arrange housing; employee provided food; medical & workers compensation. Duties:

Converts data from project specifications and statement of problems and procedures to create or modify computer program. Prepares and receives from systems analyst the workflow chart and diagram to illustrate sequence of steps that program must follow and to describe input, output and logical operations involved. Must know about programs of Synchronic Point of sale System & Peachtree accounting software. Contact: Saipan Computer Services, Inc. @234-9110.

1 ACCOUNTANT (SM 0044)

Salary:\$650.00-\$1,200.00/monthly. Benefits: Self arrange housing; employee provided food; medical & workers compensation. Duties: Prepares & compile financial records and reports such General Ledger, Cash receipts, Cash disbursement, Bank Reconciliation, monthly & annual financial statement. Reconciliation, receiving, recording & costing of inventory. Prepares payroll, monthly & quarterly reports of taxes & other government reports. Reconcile accts receivable and customer's records such as recording of payments & billing. Must know how to use Synchronic Point of sale system, Realworld & Peachtree Acctg. Software. Responsible for technical support of Counter POS & Peachtree accounting software. Contact: Saipan Computer Services, Inc. @234-9110.

1 COOK (SM 0045)

Salary:\$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arrange housing; self provided food; workmen's compensation & medical. Contact: Lucky R. Corporation @235-5009.

1 ADMIN. ASSISTANT (SM 0046)

Salary:\$4.00/hour. Benefits: Self arrange housing; self provided food; workmen's compensation & medical. Contact: Numbers Int'l Inc. @235-5009.

1 COOK (SM 0047)

Salary:\$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medical & workers compensation. Contact: JCC Corp. @234-3078.

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Salary:\$2,000.00/monthly. Benefits: Medical coverage expenses; vacation leave (earned after 1 yr. of service); sick leave (earned after 90 days of service); compassionate leave; employees discount & workers compensation. Contact: Asia Pacific Hotels, Inc. dba Saipan Grand Hotel @234-6601.

3 HOUSEKEEPING SUPERVISOR (SM 0049)

Salary:\$5.75/hour. Benefits: Self arrange housing; medical coverage expenses; vacation leave (earned after 1 yr. of service); sick leave (earned after 90 days of service); compassionate leave; employees discount & workers compensation. Contact: Asia Pacific Hotels, Inc. dba Saipan Grand Hotel @234-6601.

1 ELECTRICIAN (SM 0050)

Salary:\$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arrange housing; medical coverage

expenses; vacation leave (earned after 1 yr. of service); sick leave (earned after 90 days of service); compassionate leave; employees discount & workers compensation. Contact: Asia Pacific Hotels, Inc. dba Saipan Grand Hotel @234-6601.

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Salary:\$3.55-\$5.75/hour. Benefits: Self arrange housing; medical coverage expenses; vacation leave (earned after 1 yr. of service); sick leave (earned after 90 days of service); compassionate leave; employees discount & workers compensation. Contact: Asia Pacific Hotels, Inc. dba Saipan Grand Hotel @234-6601.

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Salary:\$1,972.00-\$2,200.00/monthly. Benefits: Taxes. Contact: Asia Pacific Hotels, Inc. dba Saipan Grand Hotel @234-6601.

1 ACCOUNTANT (SM 0053)

Salary:\$3.55-\$8.65/hour. Benefits: Self arrange housing; medical coverage expenses; vacation leave (earned after 1 yr. of service); sick leave (earned after 90 days of service); compassionate leave; employees discount & workers compensation. Contact: Asia Pacific Hotels, Inc. dba Saipan Grand Hotel @234-6601.

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Salary:\$3.55-\$3.75/hour. Benefits: \$30.00/monthly housing deduction; medical coverage expenses; vacation leave (earned after 1 yr. of service); sick leave (earned after 90 days of service); compassionate leave; employees discount & workers compensation. Contact: Asia Pacific Hotels, Inc. dba Saipan Grand Hotel @234-6601.

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Butler returns, scores 19 in Wizards win



WASHINGTON (AP)—Caron Butler unleashed a month's worth of pent-up energy on his 28th birthday, returning to the Washington Wizards lineup after a 16-game injury absence to score 19 points in a 101-99 victory over the Cleveland Cavaliers on Thursday night.

Butler, whose hip injury sent the Wizards into a February slump, scored the game's opening basket, survived some rough contact and made six of his first eight shots. The players the Wizards affectionally refer to as "Tough Juice" finished 8-for-18 from the field and had five rebounds in 41 minutes.

Butler scored only one point in the fourth quarter, but at least he had a better game than basketball-model LeBron James, who marked his appearance on the cover of the April issue of *Vogue* with a spotty performance. He was called for an offensive foul in the final 20 seconds and his potential game-winning 27-footer hit the front of the rim and bounced away as time expired.

James finished with 25 points, seven rebounds, seven assists and seven turnovers.

He went 9-for-22 from the field, including 1-for-7 from 3-point range and 1-for-6 in the fourth quarter. He was driving with a chance to tie—the Cava-

liers trailed 96-94—when he lowered his left shoulder into DeShawn Stevenson for a foul with 19.4 seconds to play.

The Wizards then went 4-for-5 from the line to take a four-point lead, but Damon Jones hit a 3-pointer with 8 seconds to play to make the score 100-99. Antonio Daniels made 1 of 2 free throws with 7.2 seconds remaining to restore a two-point lead. The Cavaliers called timeout and held the ball for the last shot, but James came up short.

The victory put the Wizards (32-32) back at .500 for the first time since they were 24-24 on Feb. 6.

Antawn Jamison had 17 points and 10 rebounds, and Darius Songaila scored 15 points on 7-for-8 shooting for the Wizards, who nearly blew a nine-point lead in the final 4 1/2 minutes.

Sasha Pavlovic scored 19 of his season-high 24 points in the first half for the Cavaliers, but he sat out much of the second half because of foul trouble and fouled out with 1:19 to play.

Butler was aggressive from the opening whistle. He made a 20-foot shot on the game's first possession and soon added another 20-footer—this time a turnaround, falling-backward jumper. He crashed to the floor belly-first while making a layup and drawing a blocking foul on Anderson Varejao, then popped

up instantly and raised his arms to a roaring crowd.

Butler had 13 of Washington's first 31 points.

Suns 123, Warriors 115

In Phoenix, the home side won its third in a row while snapping Golden State's three-game winning streak.

Amare Stoudemire had 36 points, 11 rebounds and four blocked shots for the Suns, who sank 12-of-24 3s, 7-of-12 in the second half.

Golden State, which also lost its three-game winning streak against Phoenix, still holds the Western Conference's last play-off spot.

The Suns pulled within a game of New Orleans for the No. 5 spot in the West.

Kings 96, Trail Blazers 85

In Sacramento, California, Ron Artest scored 22 points and Sacramento never trailed in defeating Portland.

The Kings had lost their previous two home games.

Washington Wizards' Caron Butler (3) runs into Cleveland Cavaliers' Anderson Varejao, center, from Brazil, while driving to the basket during the second quarter of an NBA basketball game Thursday, March 13, 2008, in Washington. Wizards' Brendan Haywood (33) looks on.

AP



NBA BRIEFS

Oden practices with the Blazers

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP)—Greg Oden practiced with the Portland Trail Blazers for the first time since right knee surgery ended the No. 1 draft pick's debut season before it started six months ago. Oden, the 7-foot center from Ohio State taken with the top selection in last year's draft, surprised his teammates Wednesday when he participated in offensive drills and even dunked during 45 minutes of half-speed work. The Blazers were in Sacramento for Thursday night's game against the Kings. "Yeah, it was nice," Oden said after lifting weights Thursday in Sacramento. "I learned some of the plays that I'm not going to use, but it was good to be out there with the guys and go through some of the stuff that they go through." Only coach Nate McMillan and athletic trainer Jay Jensen knew Oden would be in practice Wednesday for the first time since undergoing microfracture surgery in September. "They made some comments about it," McMillan said of his players. "They laughed about it and said 'Hey, finally you're here to work.'" The Blazers have stayed in contention for a playoff berth without their future franchise center. Led by All-Star Brandon Roy, Portland

is in 10th place in the Western Conference. Oden said he felt no discomfort in his knee after the workout. The Blazers still have no intention of allowing him to play this season, however. "We just changed up his workout," McMillan said. "He's been doing a little light running for about a week or so now, and that's all it was yesterday, some light running. The only difference (was that) he was with the team."

Bobcats' Wallace returns to lineup

DALLAS (AP)—Charlotte Bobcats forward Gerald Wallace was back in uniform, but not in the starting lineup Wednesday night against Dallas after missing eight games because of a concussion. Mavericks forward Devean George missed his second straight game because of lower back soreness. Wallace entered the game with 3:55 left in the first quarter, and missed his first shot seconds later. He hadn't played since Feb. 22, when he was knocked unconscious after Sacramento power forward Mikki Moore wheeled around in the post and hit Wallace with an inadvertent elbow. Wallace was finally cleared to return to practice Monday, and coach Sam Vincent planned to cautiously work him back into action. "We'll get him in early

and let him work his way back. We don't feel like he has to put anything on his shoulders," Vincent said before Wednesday's game. "We don't want to rush him into anything that will jeopardize his health." It was the fourth concussion in four seasons for Wallace, who at 20.6 points per game is on pace for his highest-scoring season of his career. He experienced some amnesia—he still doesn't remember the play—and had headaches and drowsiness for several days after being hit.

Snow out 4-6 weeks with knee injury

CLEVELAND (AP)—Cavaliers guard Eric Snow will likely miss the remainder of the regular season with a cranky left knee, just the latest medical misfortune in a season of bumps, bruises and bandages in Cleveland. Snow, who underwent surgery on his left knee just before the season opener, is expected to be out 4-to-6 weeks with arthritis-related symptoms in the knee, the team said. The 34-year-old is averaging just one point in 13.9 minutes per game this season for the injury-ravaged Cavs. But while his playing role has decreased, Snow has been helpful in tutoring some of Cleveland's younger players. The Cavs have been undermanned all season.

They're already playing without center Zydrunas Ilgauskas (bulging back disc), guard Daniel Gibson (sprained ankle) and swingman Sasha Pavlovic (sprained foot). In Monday's win over Portland, center Ben Wallace sat out the second half with back spasms. Anderson Varejao missed a chunk of games with an ankle injury and superstar LeBron James sat out six games with injuries. Cleveland went 0-6 without him. Pavlovic returned to practice Sunday and is expected to be activated for the first time since Jan. 23 on Wednesday to play in New Jersey. Pavlovic missed the start of the season in a contract holdout and has appeared in just 38 games. Ilgauskas' status isn't so certain. The 32-year-old, who has missed Cleveland's past five games, has been one of the Cavs' most durable players since overcoming several foot injuries at the start of his career. He has played in at least 78 games in each of the past five seasons. However, his nagging back has made it tough for him to play many minutes in consecutive games. On Monday, Cavs coach Mike Brown said he didn't know when the 7-foot-3 Ilgauskas will play again. Despite the rash of injuries, the Cavaliers are 10 games over .500 (37-27) for the first time this season.

Bynum progressing from kneecap injury, no timetable set for return

LOS ANGELES—Lakers center Andrew Bynum ran on a treadmill Tuesday for the first time since injuring his left knee two months ago.

Bynum temporarily dislocated his kneecap and sustained a bone bruise early in the third quarter of a 100-99 victory over the Memphis Grizzlies on Jan. 13 when he landed on teammate Lamar Odom's left foot while going for a rebound.

"He's coming along well. He's progressing," coach Phil Jackson said before Tuesday night's game against the Toronto Raptors. "It's not as fast as he'd like to, but we're looking at the big picture here."

"We know that he makes a big difference in our team, but ultimately the organization feels we don't have to rush him into anything and jeopardize the situation."

Lakers spokesman John Black said no timetable has been set for Bynum's return, adding: "We set a minimum of eight weeks. We didn't set a maximum."

The Lakers hope the 20-year-old center will return before the playoffs begin the weekend of April 18-19. He has been rehabilitating by run-

ning in a swimming pool.

Bynum ran for 20 minutes on a new \$75,000 treadmill that simulates low gravity situations. A player can run without the pounding he would normally experience on a regular treadmill or on the court, which gives his legs a break. Black said Bynum ran at 60-65 percent of his body weight.

"The thing with Andrew is how the knee responds when he works out," Jackson said. "You can see the strength coming. He still gets fatigued and it's all about that muscle firing and the protection and all that stuff that's going on."

"It's just part of recovery from an injury and the body protecting itself. But the swelling that happens around that injury is what we're going to have to watch and eliminate as we go down the stretch toward the end of the season."

A third-year pro taken by the Lakers with the 10th overall pick in the 2005 draft, Bynum is averaging 13.1 points, 10.2 rebounds and 2.06 blocked shots. He was the NBA leader in field-goal percentage (63.6 percent) and ranked 11th in rebounding and ninth in blocked shots when he was injured.

Couples leads Bay Hill; Tiger struggles



ORLANDO, Fla. (AP)—Fred Couples made four birdies in his opening six holes, shot 5-under 65, and golf finally felt fun. Tiger Woods couldn't hit the green with a wedge, struggled to shoot even par, and he finally looked human.

The Arnold Palmer Invitational delivered a few surprises Thursday, none bigger than the 48-year-old Couples booming tee shots, taking only 23 putts and finishing atop the leaderboard with J.J. Henry.

"This doesn't make me the guy to beat," Couples said. "If I can play like that, it makes it a lot easier. When you birdie four out of the first six holes, there's not much that can bother you."

In three previous trips to Bay Hill, Henry had never done better than 71. He played under warm sunshine without a bogey, making four birdie putts outside 15 feet.

"I feel like I've been close," he said. "And today, finally, everything clicked."

They were a stroke ahead of defending champion Vijay Singh, Lee Westwood, Tom Lehman and Lucas Glover, who got a pep talk from friends to quit being so hard on himself. Despite consecutive bogeys, Glover kept his cool and ended a streak of eight consecutive rounds without breaking 70.

For Couples, it was his best score at Bay Hill since a 63 in 1992, the year he won this tournament and was No. 1 in the world.

Woods is the world's No. 1 player now, having won every tournament he has played since September. It sure didn't look that way after a birdie on the opening hole. He missed one green with a pitching wedge, another green with a sand wedge, and settled for a 70 that left him five shots behind, but not in awful shape.

He didn't make a lot of putts, and Woods attributed that to the each green having a different speed.

But he took some of the blame.

"You had to make adjustments on the fly," he said. "It would have helped if I hit more greens. I never gave myself a chance to make putts. I missed two greens with a pitching wedge and a sand wedge. I don't ever do that."

Woods headed home to sort it out, not overly bothered by his worst start since the Deutsche Bank Championship, which was the last time he failed to win. Besides, only 33 players managed to break par. Phil Mickelson opened with a 72.

Couples woke up early Thursday and began visualizing his round, figuring out where would be his best chances at birdie. He didn't see too many of those holes in his head, but it was a different story on the golf course.

Playing aggressively with a driver he could trust, Couples rarely had more than wedge into the green, and the suspect condition of the putting surfaces—they are recovering from a worm disease—didn't bother him in the least.

"I'm not saying they're bad," Couples said. "But I think I'm a good putter when they're not ideal."

After hitting some 30 yards over the green on the par-3 14th and saving par, the guy once known as "Boom Boom" ripped another tee shot over the corner on the 15th for a wedge into about 10 feet for his fourth birdie. His only bogey came on the par-3 17th with a shot into the bleachers.

And he almost dropped one at the end of his round.

Surrounded by trees right of the eighth fairway, where a pond guards the front of the green, Couples looked cool as ever. He studied the top of the trees, looked to the right of them, under them and out to the fairway, the whole time studying his options as if he were admiring a piece of art.

He finally selected an 8-iron, and while it clipped a twig, the ball had just enough distance to clear the water. He



Fred Couples drives off the seventh tee during the first round of the Arnold Palmer Invitational golf tournament at the Bay Hill Club in Orlando, Fla. Thursday, March 13, 2008.

chipped to 8 feet and saved par, and kept gliding to the end of his round.

"I took 10 minutes to hit it, but I kept trying to visualize just getting over the tree—not where I got it way up over it,

so high and not far enough," he said. "I think it clipped a leaf, or clipped something. I smoked it, and it was a yard from being in the water."

Couples has not seen his name on

the leaderboard since his back-nine duel with Mickelson at the Masters two years ago, when Lefty won his second green jacket. Couples gave him a good run, describing his chances as only he can.

"I just couldn't match him when the nitty-gritty was nitty-gritty," he said.

Of course, Couples hasn't had a ton of chances since then. He played only twice in the regular season a year ago because of a back injury so severe that he contemplated life without golf.

This is his sixth start of the year, however, and while he knows his back can go at any moment, he's relishing the times he plays well.

"My back will go out and when it does, I'll know. And where I hit the ball, everyone else will know," Couples said. "But as far as worrying about it, there's not much you can do."

Couples was appointed Presidents Cup captain for 2009 earlier this month, and he's still fired up about that. Most everyone believes he'll be a good one, someone who brings a relaxed atmosphere from the team room to the golf course.

Woods has played with him in the matches, and he has been paired with him on the weekend, and he sees another side.

"He's a lot more tense than people think," Woods said. "You see how he walks, his mannerisms. But below the surface, it's raging pretty good."

Richardson: Arkansas State the wrong fit



LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (AP)—Nolan Richardson said he's no longer a candidate to become the basketball coach at Arkansas State.

"There were some things that weren't able to fit," Richardson said Tuesday.

Richardson has been out of college coaching since 2002, when he was fired by Arkansas. He said last week he was talking to Arkansas State, which has had an opening since Dickey Nutt resigned Feb. 19.

Richardson said he and Arkansas State decided to move in different directions. He made it clear Tuesday that he's still interested in coaching—but only in the right situation.

"I've got all the fire in the world in my belly," the 66-year-old Richardson said. "I'm looking for that fit."

Richardson's recent coaching experience includes a pair of stints at the international level, coaching national teams from Panama and Mexico.

Richardson coached Arkansas to a national championship in 1994, but was fired in 2002. He later lost a discrimination lawsuit against the school.

Richardson has stayed in the Fayetteville area and has been supportive of Stan Heath and John Pelphrey, the coaches who replaced him.

Arkansas State does not have the same statewide following as the Razorbacks, but Richardson said last week he believed the program had the potential to attract support.

Red Sox put Schilling on 60-day DL



FORT MYERS, Fla. (AP)—The Boston Red Sox placed

Curt Schilling on the 60-day disabled list Thursday as he continues to rehabilitate his right shoulder.

They also released Doug Mirabelli, who had been the personal catcher for knuckleballer Tim Lincecum, and sent five players to the minors. Moving Schilling to the disabled list cleared space for Boston to sign right-hander Lincoln Holdzkom to its 40-man roster.

The moves left the Red Sox with 40 players, including Schilling, in their major league camp six days before they leave for Tokyo, where they're scheduled to play two exhibition games against Japanese teams and two regular season games against the Oakland Athletics.

Schilling has said he would have preferred surgery, but the team insisted he try rehab. The right-hander said he wasn't hurt when he signed a one-year, \$8 million contract with the Red Sox in November.

Mirabelli was placed on unconditional waivers despite his ability to handle the knuckleball. The skill Kevin Cash showed in catching Wakefield last year makes him the likely replacement for the 37-year-old Mirabelli.

Giants pitcher to undergo surgery

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. (AP)—San Francisco Giants pitcher Noah Lowry will have surgery on his left forearm Friday after a recent bout of wildness and is probably out until the end of April.

Lowry was the Giants' top winner with a 14-8 record last season. The lefty had trouble throwing strikes this spring and the team sent him back to the Bay Area to be examined by a hand specialist.

The Giants said Thursday that Lowry was diagnosed with exertional compartment syndrome. According to MayoClinic.com, it is "an exercise-induced neuromuscular condition that causes pain, swelling and sometimes even disability in affected muscles of the legs or arms" and seems to affect primarily athletes in their 20s.

"The thing we wanted to do was identify the problem and it looks like we've done that," Giants manager Bruce Bochy said. "Despite it's not great news, it is good news to have

found out what's going on, what the problem is." Lowry could resume throwing in two or three weeks, but Bochy acknowledged the lefty probably won't be available to pitch until the end of April.

"This is something that I don't know enough about it to know how rare it is, but you don't hear about it a lot," Bochy said. "It's not like this is a common occurrence in baseball players."

The 27-year-old Lowry struggled with his control during his first game at spring training, then walked nine of 12 batters against Texas on Monday.

Lowry was later diagnosed with tendinitis in his wrist, and went for a series of tests in San Francisco.

Lowry was projected to be third or fourth in the Giants rotation. Without him, San Francisco will look at right-hander Kevin Correia and lefties Jonathan Sanchez and Patrick Misch.

"We're going to sit down and talk about what our options are," Bochy said.

Mirabelli hit a career-high .281 in 2004 when Boston won its first World

Series title in 86 years. But he batted just .191 in 2006 and .202 last season.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
x-Boston	51	12	.810	—
Toronto	34	30	.531	17 1/2
Philadelphia	31	34	.477	21
New Jersey	27	38	.415	25
New York	19	46	.292	33

Southeast Division

Orlando	42	24	.636	—
Washington	32	32	.500	9
Atlanta	26	38	.406	15
Charlotte	24	40	.375	17
Miami	11	52	.175	29 1/2

Central Division

x-Detroit	46	18	.719	—
Cleveland	37	29	.561	10
Chicago	26	38	.406	20
Indiana	25	39	.391	21
Milwaukee	23	42	.354	23 1/2

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

Houston	44	20	.688	—
San Antonio	44	20	.688	—
New Orleans	43	20	.683	1/2
Dallas	42	23	.646	2 1/2
Memphis	15	49	.234	29

Northwest Division

Utah	43	23	.652	—
Denver	38	26	.594	4
Portland	34	32	.515	9
Seattle	16	49	.246	26 1/2
Minnesota	14	49	.222	27 1/2

Pacific Division

L.A. Lakers	45	19	.703	—
Phoenix	43	22	.662	2 1/2
Golden State	40	24	.625	5
Sacramento	29	35	.453	16
L.A. Clippers	21	42	.333	23 1/2

x-clinched playoff spot

Yesterday's Games

Washington 101, Cleveland 99
Sacramento 96, Portland 85
Phoenix 123, Golden State 115

ARNOLD PALMER INVITATIONAL SCORES

ORLANDO, Florida (AP)—Scores Thursday from the Arnold Palmer Invitational, a \$5.8 million (€3.7 million) U.S. PGA Tour event at 7,162-yard, par-70 (35-35) Bay Hill Club and Lodge:

First Round		
Fred Couples	33-32	65
J.J. Henry	33-32	65
Tom Lehman	32-34	66
Lee Westwood	34-32	66
Vijay Singh	34-32	66
Lucas Glover	33-33	66
Ken Duke	34-33	67
Jim Furyk	33-34	67
Cliff Kresge	34-33	67
Bubba Watson	35-32	67
Alex Cejka	35-32	67
Tim Clark	33-35	68
Steve Lowery	33-35	68
Hunter Mahan	35-33	68
Andres Romero	35-33	68
Vaughn Taylor	35-33	68
Dustin Johnson	36-32	68
Nicholas Thompson	36-32	68
Chad Campbell	34-34	68
Carl Pettersson	36-32	68
Bart Bryant	35-33	68
Rocco Mediate	34-34	68
D.A. Points	35-33	68
Richard Johnson	37-32	69
Nick Watney	35-34	69
Frank Lickliter II	37-32	69
Billy Mayfair	35-34	69
John Mallinger	35-34	69

By The Associated Press

NOBLE

From Page 28

ing on Saipan in 2005. She won her first of four XTERRA crowns that same year dislodging three-time winner Jamie Whitmore at the top of the podium.

Whitmore bounced back in the 16th Tagaman to complete her back-to-back title bid and eclipse her second place finish in the XTERRA that year. Bucher finished second to Whitmore with at time of 3:22:31.

She placed fourth in the 2006 Tagaman, but improved her record to 3:20:44. The following year, in 2007, she skipped the Tagaman to join the International Triathlon Union Mooloolaba BG Triathlon World Cup on March 25 in Mooloolaba, Australia, which is a qualifying tournament for the

Swiss National Triathlon Team in the Beijing Olympics in August.

Out to foil Bucher's Tagaman title bid are Saipan's Mieko Carey, who finished second to her in last week's XTERRA, and Kiyoko Takahashi of Japan.

As of press time there are 54 triathletes from Saipan, Tinian, Japan, Korea, Russia, Malaysia, USA, and Australia have registered to join today's race. A lot more are expected to sign up in yesterday's final registration at 5pm at PIC.

Most of the Tagaman participants also saw action in last week's XTERRA Saipan led by top male amateur Eli Torgeson, who is also aiming for his first PIC Double.

A Tagaman course orientation also took place yesterday at PIC where a carbo dinner party was also held.

SGA March Ace of the Month tomorrow

The Saipan Golf Association will hold its March Ace of the Month Tournament tomorrow, March 16, at the Marianas Country Club n Marpi

Check-in time for the club's third monthly competition of the year is 8:30am with tee time set 51 minutes later at 9:21am.

In related news, SGA is encouraging members to participate in the 6th Annual Mt. Carmel School Golf Tournament set for this Saturday, March 15, at Laolao Bay Golf Resort west course. The fee is \$100 and show time is 6:30am. Tee time is

scheduled precisely at 7:30am.

Veteran golfers Mariano Fajardo and Joe Sablan have bragging rights for the first two month of SGA's season as they secured January and February Ace titles, respectively. Slots are available for 24 play-



BUCHER

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combined times in XTERRA Saipan Championship and the Tagaman Triathlon.

At one point, Bucher lost the PIC Double by just 11 seconds. "That was hard for me. The race was really close."

Perennial XTERRA Saipan favorite Whitmore, who is a three-time XTERRA winner, still holds the PIC Double record when she had a combined time of 6:07:32 in 2004 completing XTERRA in 3:04:31 and Tagaman in 3:03:01.

Whitmore and 2007 Tagaman women's champion Julie Dibbens of Great Britain did not join this year because they are recov-

ering from separate injuries.

Bucher said even though Whitmore and Dibbens will not be competing she won't take her other opponents lightly. "I expect a good race against the Japanese and Mieko [Carey]."

Carey placed second to Bucher in last week's XTERRA and momentarily held the lead in the swim and halfway in the bike leg when the two-time XTERRA European Tour champion passed her.

"If I get a good lead against Mieko and encounter no technical problems on my bike I can see myself winning the Tagaman for the first time."

Bucher said that road racing is a bit of a challenge for her. "Racing on the flat road is hard for me since it is not my specialty. Just

seeing the flat course makes me think 'I have to go through there?' I am much comfortable in the woods, trails, and hill climbs.

"But I am willing to work hard. To have a good race since I have fully recovered very well after last week's XTERRA and I am in great shape. No injuries."

She aims to improve with her swim this time since this is one of her weakest points in triathlon. "Allan Collinson, who is my friend and personal trainer, wants to beat me in the swim but I won't give up that easily."

Bucher is also hoping not to encounter stray dogs while riding the bike course. Dogs chased her in her first two Tagaman. "They nearly caught me. They were chasing me and were really close and that scared me.

I hope the owners would lock their dogs inside the house."

Bucher said there would be no rest for her after Tagaman. "I just enjoyed my stay here at PIC and I tried the course but I did not go out that hard. After Tagaman I leave for Australia on Sunday."

"So after the Tagaman party I have to pack but I still have some time to say goodbye to everyone, buy some souvenirs, and hang out for a while before I leave on Sunday."

Bucher will leave Saipan at 3pm and will spend nine days in Australia for another training session to prepare for a series of selection races in Europe in order to qualify for the Swiss national Mt. Bike team for the Beijing Olympics in August.

CLOSE

From Page 28

Mojica said he expects Andrew Noble to defend his title, while Bucher will finally win her first Tagaman crown after her third try. "He [Noble] won it last year and he knows the course. Though [Noble] will have stiff competition from Jim [Vance] but he will still prevail. The traditional triathlon is more on strength."

"[Bucher], meanwhile, only has Mieko as her close competitor. Mieko is hardcore when it comes to triathlon but she is not a pro like [Bucher]. [Carey] still has a job aside

from triathlon. Unlike[Bucher] triathlon is her life."

Carey just wanted to stay close behind Bucher. "I think the race will be close with[Bucher]. I don't know who else has joined from Japan on the women's side."

She said she also aims to lower her time last year. "I just want to finish in less than three hours and 45 minutes, which would be 10 minutes faster than my time from last year."

"[Also] I just want to beat Nate 'The Snakeman' Hawley because he is my nemesis," Carey said in between laughs. "I'm just joking, we are good friends."

Carey predicted that it would be a close race between Noble, Vance, and last year's runner-

up Masayuki Matsumaru of Japan. She also did not rule out Eli Torgeson's chances. "They are very good athletes who would definitely push each other very hard."

Carey added there is also an interesting scene that is shaping up in the event as several squads beefed up their lineups to claim first place. "There are three or four teams that will be battling for first place. It is going to be a fun race."

Tagaman organizers also cautioned motorists to expect heavy bike and foot traffic from PIC to Marpi.

The northbound lane of Beach Road, from PIC to Marpi, will be closed from 6:30am to 8:30am,

while the southbound portion, from Micro Beach to Microl intersection, will be closed from 8:30am to 11:30am to give way to all participants, who will do the run portion of the race.

Middle Road, from the Commonwealth Health Center going to American Memorial Park will also be closed from 7:30am to 11am, while personnel from Department of Public Safety allotted the inner lane of the road from AMP to Marpi, past San Roque, for bikers.

Expect additional bike traffic along the Koblerville loop and dog owners are advised to tie up or keep their pets inside their houses to prevent them from chasing down the participants.

FAVRE

From Page 28

secutive games. No quarterback has won more games, thrown more passes, completed more passes, passed for more yards or touchdowns—or thrown more interceptions—than Brett Favre. And nobody has won three straight MVP awards—not Jim Brown, not Roger Staubach, not Tom Brady, nobody.

OK, Favre didn't win four championships, like Montana or Terry Bradshaw. He didn't lead his team to five Super Bowls, like Elway, or even win three like Troy Aikman or Brady, who still has time to win enough games to sit at the big table with Graham, Unitas, Montana and Elway. He didn't win a historic game the way Joe Willie Namath did. But he was out there every single game, not in a dome or the South Florida sun but in the snow and freezing cold without gloves, an athlete in the mold of Fran Tarkenton

and a gunslinger of a passer who could have played in the American Football League.

By all rights, being a Chicago boy who lives and dies with the Bears, I should have hated Favre all these years because the Packers, and for that matter all the Cheeseheads, are to us what the Yanks are to the Sawx—and vice versa—but I couldn't. Favre was too good, had too great a flair for the dramatic, was too honest on the days when he stunk out the joint. Cheesehead or not, I found myself, the older he got, cheering for him, probably the way Knicks fans at Madison Square Garden gave it up for Michael Jordan, because not many football players can operate at a level where they could put on a show as consistently as Favre could. If Warren Sapp and Michael Strahan, who were paid to rip Favre's head off, came to love him even as they chased him around for more than a decade, how could the rest of us not find him irresistible?

OK, the praise got to be a little

much after that 2003 Monday night game following the death of his father, Big Irv. We in the media can overdo anything. As magical as the night was, one would have thought Favre was the only player to ever perform immediately following the death of a loved one, which in reality happens somewhere in the league at least once every season. It became fashionable to let Favre slide after bad games, of which there were many in three of his last four seasons. Praise was heaped when Favre made a simple dump-off pass; there was silence when he threw up one of the wounded ducks, like the one that appears now to be the final pass of his career.

Favre was too good to be praised when he didn't deserve it. Maybe that, too, is evidence of how good a player he once was, especially when he and Reggie White led the Packers to the Super Bowl at the end of the 1996 season.

What saved the story's ending is the way Favre played the

2007 season, without the taint of something like "Spygate" and without the ego-driven theater that now accompanies so much of what the Cowboys do.

But it's the "ending" that makes the retirement fairly stunning, and leads to questions about how final his decision is. The Packers are legitimately good again, talented enough at running back, along the offensive line and on defense that Favre doesn't have to carry the team. There's evidence he might have been willing to come back had the Packers stacked the deck with personnel the way the Patriots did last season. That would suggest that Favre still wants to play, that he's still thinking not only about playing, but winning. And if he's feeling that way now, it's fair and natural to wonder if Favre, come late summer, will be able to resist doing something he's done marvelously for so long, something that made him that rarest of athletes—an icon of professional football.



Couples leads Bay Hill; Tiger struggles

Fred Couples made four birdies in his opening six holes, shot 5-under 65, and golf finally felt fun. Tiger Woods couldn't hit the green with a wedge, struggled to shoot even par, and he finally looked human. **26**

Saipan Tribune Sports

Butler returns, scores 19 in Wizards win

Caron Butler unleashed a month's worth of pent-up energy on his 28th birthday, returning to the Washington Wizards lineup after a 16-game injury absence to score 19 points in a 101-99 victory over the Cleveland Cavaliers on Thursday night. **25**



28 SATURDAY, MARCH 15, 2008

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Bucher in high spirits for Tagaman

By JON PEREZ

jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Four-time XTERRA Saipan champion Renata Bucher of Switzerland is in high spirits as she hopes to finally win her first Tagaman Triathlon title when Saipan's longest-running racing event kicks off its 19th edition at 6am today at Pacific Islands Club.



"I am expecting to win. I will just keep my pace in the race and hopefully finally win Tagaman," said Bucher in an interview yesterday at PIC.

Bucher has not won the Tagaman, placing second to Jamie Whitmore in 2005 and fourth in 2006 behind Kate Bevilaqua of Australia, Whitmore, and Naomi Imazumi of Japan. She did not join last year to concentrate on an Olympic qualifying event in Mooloolaba, Australia.

Aside from her first Tagaman title, Bucher is also aiming to earn her second PIC Double after winning it in 2005 with a combined XTERRA and Tagaman times of six hours, 14 minutes, and 11 seconds.

The PIC Double is awarded to the man and woman with the fastest

See **BUCHER** on Page 27



JON PEREZ

Four-time XTERRA Saipan champion Renata Bucher of Switzerland, right, flashes the thumbs up sign after joining trainer Allan Collinson of Australia in a brief workout in the Tagaman run course yesterday at the Pacific Islands Club.

Noble aims Tagaman repeat, Bucher eyes first title

By JON PEREZ

jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Australian Andrew Noble and four-time XTERRA Saipan winner Renata Bucher of Switzerland will have separate missions today when the 19th Tagaman Triathlon kicks off at the Pacific Islands Club beach at 6am.

Noble will be aiming for his second straight Tagaman title, while Bucher eyes to win her first crown since competing in the PIC Double three years ago.

Noble is the man to watch after winning last week's 7th XTERRA Saipan Championship with a combined time of two hours, 46 min-

utes, and 51 seconds to claim the \$2,200 top prize.

Out to challenge him for the open title is American Jim Vance, last year's runner-up Masayuki Matsumaru of Japan, and Korea's Yu Hun Park.

Bucher will try to finally win the title that has eluded her since first compet-

See **NOBLE** on Page 27



Close finish in today's Tagaman

By JON PEREZ

jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Taga Inc. president Wolf Mojica and 7th XTERRA Saipan Championship runner-up Mieke Carey expects a close race in the men's division in today's 19th Tagaman Triathlon, which starts at 6am at the Pacific Islands Club beach.

See **CLOSE** on Page 27



JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Andrew Noble of Australia, left, and Jim Vance of the United States talk after completing the 7th Annual XTERRA Championship last Saturday at the American Memorial Park. The two will be the main rivals in today's 19th Tagaman Triathlon.

By MICHAEL WILBON

The Washington Post



Favre's star was the brightest

By MICHAEL WILBON

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When it comes to recognition, the NFL prefers its players to fall somewhere between low profile and anonymous, the easier to stage replacement games if necessary and the better to let other leagues, like the NBA, deal with guaranteed contracts. But Brett Favre, for most of his 17 years in the league, was the grand exception, instantly and unmistakably identifiable. Part of it had to be the premature gray that puts you in the mind of George Clooney, who simply must be the one to portray Favre on the screen, if it ever comes to that.

Favre isn't retiring as the greatest quarterback in the history of the league; Otto Graham, Johnny Unitas, Joe Montana and John Elway, among others, would rank ahead of him on any credible list of greatest quarterbacks. But Favre has been as identifiable as any of the above at any time, on the field and off it. It helped that he played in Green Bay, the smallest but most pro football-obsessed community in America. It helped that he won a Super Bowl fairly early in his career, that he butted heads with opposing defensive linemen who wanted to eat him for lunch and jumped into the arms of offensive linemen like some eighth-grade boy in the schoolyard.

It helped that he was part Cal Ripken and part Mickey Mantle, that he carried that Mississippi accent all the way up to Dairyland, where the Cheeseheads found that a guy from a tiny town near the Gulf of Mexico isn't all that different from guys living in a tiny frozen town on a bay off Lake Michigan. It helped that Favre walked around that flannel kind of town without a posse or bodyguards, usually wearing jeans and a sweatshirt. It helped that he was a guy who played the night after his father died unexpectedly of a heart attack, and cried when his wife learned she had breast cancer, and dealt publicly with something as embarrassing as being addicted to painkillers.

It helped that not many football players get a larger-than-cameo role in a hit movie as "Favre" did in "There's Something About Mary." Any way you cut it, Favre was a huge, huge star in a league that is so star-averse it has a rule that prohibits players from removing their helmets on the field. Of course, none of it would have mattered a lick if Favre couldn't play, but he could to the degree that the history of the NFL absolutely cannot be written without him.

Every meaningful record a quarterback can have, Favre retired with Wednesday, presuming you really and truly believe he isn't coming back. No quarterback has started more con-

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